



Background and Current Conditions Report

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saffordaz.gov



City of Safford General Plan

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
INTRODUCTION	1
Early History	3
Physical Setting	4
Document Review	9
Demographics and Housing	14
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION	20
Major Roadways and Functional Classification	20
Traffic Volumes	22
Major Transportation Projects Completed since the 2004 General Plan	23
Transportation/Circulation Issues	23
City of Safford Transportation Study 2007	24
US Highway Corridor 192 Study (SR266 to US 70)	25
US Highway 191: A Viable Alternative	26
Alternate Modes of Transportation	27
Transit	29
Safford Regional Airport	32
Railroad Access	34
Summary	35
ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	36
Scenarios for the Upper Gila River Watershed	36
Natural Hazard Vulnerability	37
Water Supply Availability (Groundwater and Surface Water)	39
Gila River Restoration: A Plausible Regional Solution	39
Cultural Resources	41
Visual Resources	43
Dark Skies	43
Air Quality	43
Water Quality and Water Resources	43
Project 20/20 Vision: Water System Planning	44
2014 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report	44
Water Resources Statement	45
Energy	46
Solar Energy: An Economic Development Tool	47



TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	Page
PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES	50
Safford Police Department	50
Safford Fire Department	51
Water and Wastewater Programs	54
Water Program	54
Historic Water Consumption	54
Water Distribution System	58
Water Reclamation	59
The Safford City-Graham County Library	59
Utilities	61
Electrical Utilities	61
Natural Gas	62
Solid Waste and Recycling	62
GROWTH AREAS AND LAND USE	63
Legislative Framework	63
General Plan New Direction	64
General Plan Framework	65
Major Definitions	65
Safford’s Growth Areas	66
North Growth Area	66
East Growth Area	70
South Growth Area	71
Safford’s Character Areas	72
Gila River Restoration	72
Agriculture/Agribusiness/Future Residential	72
Safford Neighborhoods	72
Safford Downtown	72
Medical Corridor	79
Commerce and Employment	79
Commercial Highway Corridor	80
Safford Regional Airport	81
Industry	81
Aggregate/Extraction	81
Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex	82
COMMUNITY VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	96
Community Vision	96
Safford’s Vision Statement	96
Guiding Principles (Guiding Each Policy Plan Element)	96
Growth Areas	96
Land Use	96



TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	Page
Parks, Recreation, Sports, Shared Paths, and Trails	97
Transportation and Circulation	98
Economic Development/Fiscal Viability	98
Housing	99
Community Design, Character and Identity	100
Environmental Planning	105
Public Services and Facilities	105
Public Community Services	105
Cost of Development	106

EXHIBITS

	Page
Exhibit 1: City of Safford Regional Context and Study Area	2
Exhibit 2: Topography	8
Exhibit 3: Functionally Classified Roadways in the City of Safford	21
Exhibit 4: City of Safford Shared-Use Path System	29
Exhibit 5: Regional Transit System	31
Exhibit 6: Hydrology	42
Exhibit 7: Areas of Low, Moderate, and High Megawatt Solar Energy Production Potential	49
Exhibit 8: Safford Public Services Geographic Areas	52
Exhibit 9: Safford Fire Districts Geographic Areas	53
Exhibit 10: City of Safford General Plan Study Area	67
Exhibit 11: City of Safford Growth Areas	68
Exhibit 12: City of Safford Proposed Conceptual Future Transportation/Circulation System	69
Exhibit 13: Safford's Character Areas	84

Introduction

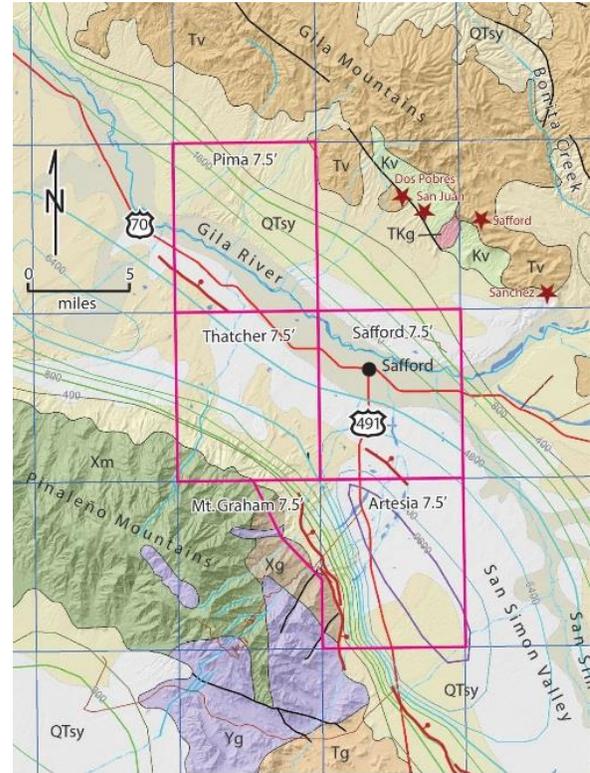
This Background and Current Conditions volume of the Safford General Plan summarizes physical, environmental, and regulatory opportunities and constraints impacting growth management in the City of Safford and serves as the foundation of the Safford General Plan Policy Volume.

SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA PLANNING AREA

The City of Safford is located in the Southeastern Arizona Planning Area. This area encompasses 16,072 square miles (sq. mi.) of geographically diverse groundwater basins in the southeastern corner of Arizona. Groundwater basins include: Aravaipa Canyon, Bonita Creek, Cienega Creek, Donnelly Wash, Douglas, Dripping Springs Wash, Duncan Valley, Lower San Pedro, Morenci, Safford, San Bernardino Valley, San Rafael, Upper San Pedro and Wilcox.

The Southeastern Arizona Planning Area is bounded on the east by New Mexico, on the south by the international boundary with the state of Sonora, Mexico, on the west by the Active Management Area (AMA) Planning Area (Phoenix, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Tucson AMAs) and on the north by the Central Highlands Planning Area and a small portion of the Eastern Plateau Planning Area. This planning area includes parts of 5 watersheds. The City of Safford is the third largest growth center in the Southeastern Arizona Planning Area with Sierra Vista and Douglas being the first and second.

REGIONAL CONTEXT



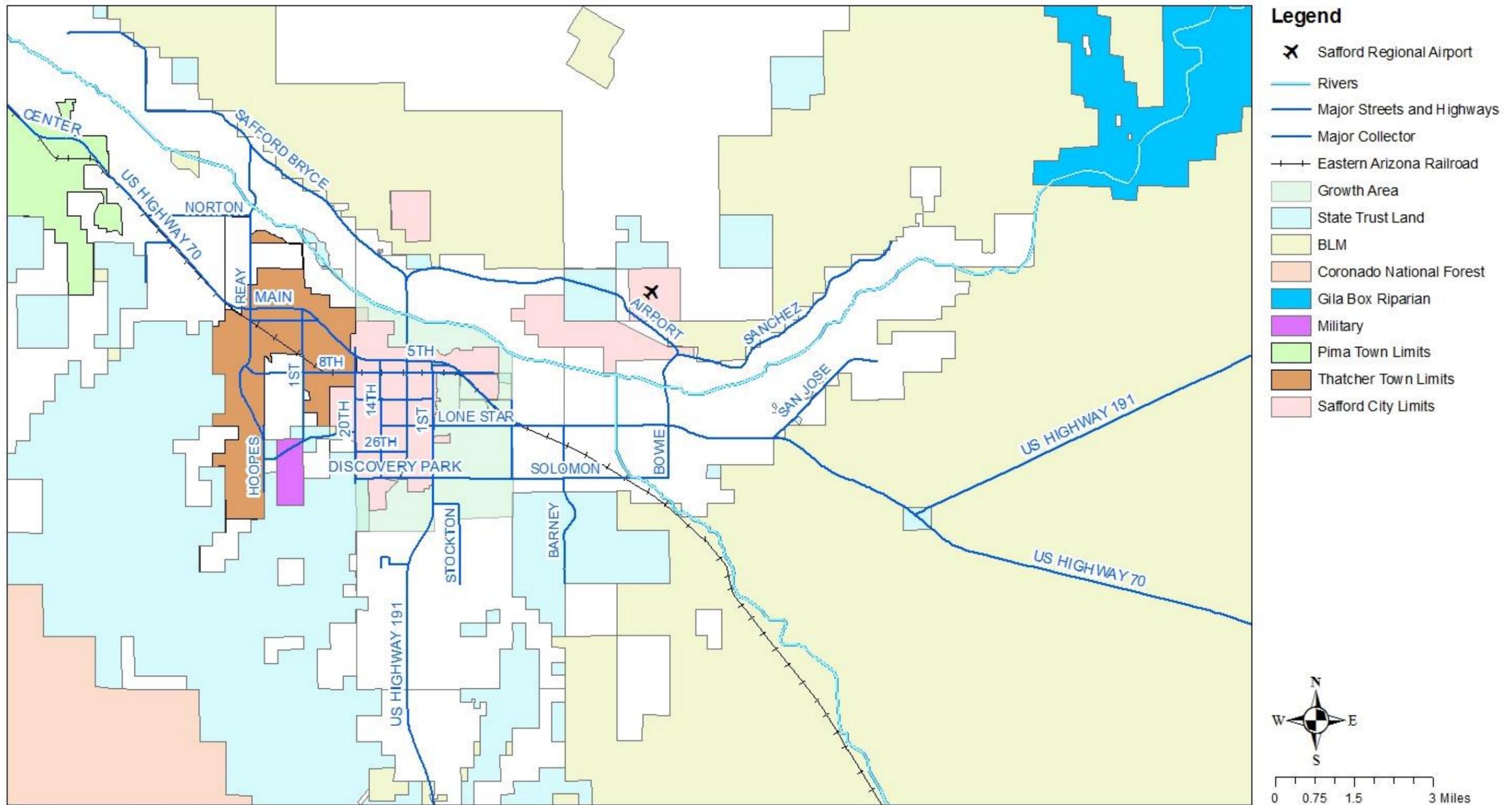
Safford Regional Context, USGS Quadrangles

The City of Safford is the county seat of Graham County and is located in the Upper Gila River Valley in the southeast corner of Arizona. The Gila River traverses the community on its northern portion. Incorporated in 1901, the City covers an area of 8.6 square miles and is bordered by the City of Thatcher on the west and unincorporated areas of Graham County on the west, south, east and north.

Safford is located 160 miles east of Phoenix and 125 miles northeast of Tucson. Safford is the principal city of the Safford Micropolitan Statistical Area, which includes all of Graham and, to the east, Greenlee counties.

Exhibit 1 shows City of Safford Regional Context.

Exhibit 1: City of Safford Regional Context and Study Area



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016



EARLY HISTORY

The Safford Valley and its surrounding region is a cultural crossroads of the Southwest. Evidence indicates that people of the San Pedro-Cochise culture practiced a hunter-gatherer lifestyle in the vicinity prior to 500 BC. The San Pedro-Cochise people were the direct ancestors of the Mogollon, who, along with the Anasazi and the Hohokam formed the three most significant cultural groups of the prehistoric southwest.

The Gila River Valley in the vicinity of Safford lay along the path of Spanish exploration, and Coronado himself may have passed this way in search of the legendary Seven Cities of Cibola in the summer of 1540.

Around the time of Spanish exploration, the Apache Indians began to move into the Safford area from the northeast. By the seventeenth century the Apaches had established complete dominance over the region that would keep Spaniard, Mexican and Anglo settlers out for nearly three hundred years.

The first Anglo-American incursion into the region came when the Army of the West under Major General Stephen Watts Kearney, traveling the entire length of the Gila River in route to California, camped at the foot of Mt. Graham in late October of 1846. The area remained under the nominal control of the Mexican government, until it was acquired as part of the Gadsden Purchase in 1852.

Although trappers and mountain men as Kit Carson and James Ohio Pattie risked death at the hands of the Apaches to venture into the Gila River Valley in search of beaver pelts, the constant threat of attack by the Apaches kept any Anglo-American presence in the upper Gila Valley to a bare minimum until June of 1864 when the Army post of Camp Goodwin was

established twenty-eight miles northwest of present-day Safford. At first, only a few isolated settlements were established in the area to provide beef and horses to Camp Goodwin, and later to Ft. Grant, Ft. Thomas and the San Carlos Agency.

By the early 1870's rich copper mines were operating in the nearby Clifton District and fabulous silver strikes were being reported in the Globe District. In response to the needs of the miners, the Gila Valley began to bloom with grain fields, fruit orchards, vegetable patches, and cattle ranches.

The first permanent settlers to take advantage of the rich lowlands along the river were Mexican immigrants from the Mesilla Valley and Sonora who cleared land for farming. They built a small village of adobe huts near the Pueblo Viejo ruin.

Within a few months William Munson established a store to serve the village and christened the community "Munsonville." Munson soon sold out to I. E. Solomon, founder of Solomonville, and went to seek his fortune in the Globe District, where he discovered a silver nugget of legendary size. Munsonville was, for a time, known as Pueblo Viejo, but eventually adopted the name of San Jose, which it retains to the present.

Joshua Eaton Bailey, Daniel Hughes, Hiram Kennedy and John C. Glasby, farmers from the Gila Bend area who had been wiped out when the Gila River flooded in 1873, decided to try their luck further upriver, and made their way to the present site of Safford in January 1874. They set to work clearing fields and digging the Central Canal to bring Gila River water to irrigate them.



Bailey, known as Safford's founding father, christened the new settlement "Safford" in honor of Territorial Governor Anson P. K. Safford who toured the valley shortly after the farmers' arrival.

In addition to his farming ventures, Bailey established the new community's first business, a combination general store, gaming parlor and saloon. He also set up a post office in the store and became the town's first postmaster on March 5, 1875.

C. M. Ritter surveyed the Safford Townsite in December 1875, and recorded the town plat on January 11, 1876. The 11th Territorial Assembly carved Graham County, including what would later become Greenlee County, out of portions of Apache and Pima counties in 1881. Safford was designated as the county seat.

In 1883 the seat of county government was moved five miles east to the prospering village of Solomonville. In 1915 Greenlee County was split off from Graham County and the county seat moved once again to Safford.

Physical Setting

The Pinaleno Mountains sit prominently to the southwest of town. The Pinalenos have the greatest vertical relief of any mountain range in Arizona. The mountain for which the county is named, Mount Graham, is just a few miles southwest of the city. An intermountain valley, Safford enjoys spectacular views of the surrounding mountain ranges.



TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS AND VEGETATION

This section is based on information provided in the Soil Survey Safford Area, Arizona prepared in June 1970 by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Services in Cooperation with the University of Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station. The soil survey area encompasses 208,500 acres, or about 325 square miles. The Safford area is made up mainly of nearly level soils of the bottom lands and gently sloping soils of the terraces along the Gila River in the central part of Graham County.

Safford began as the center of a small farming community. Thatcher is the second largest town. Other towns in the survey area are Pima, Solomon, and Fort Thomas.

Much of the bottom land along the river-36,000 to 40,000 acres-includes irrigated crops, mainly cotton, alfalfa, barley, and pasture. The gently sloping terraces that step up from one level to another to the foot of the mountain are grazed by cattle. Other parts of the survey area



are used for range, wildlife, community developments, recreation and watershed.

A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils. It normally consists of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil, and it is named for the major soils. A map is not suitable for planning the management of a farm or field, because the soils in any one association ordinarily differ in slope, depth, stoniness, drainage, and other characteristics. More site-specific soil analyses are needed to appropriately identified soils at parcel level, which is outside of the scope of a general plan.

The five soil associations identified in the Safford Area are:

Grabe-Gila-Anthony Association

This soil association includes deep, nearly level, loamy soils of the inner valley. This association consists of soils on flood plains and alluvial fans along the Gila River and its tributaries of the inner valley. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent. Elevations range from 2,600 to 3,100 feet above sea level, and the average annual rainfall is about 9 inches.

In unirrigated areas the vegetation is mesquite, saltbush, salt cedar, creosote bush, and annual weeds and grasses.

This association makes up about 43 percent of the Safford Area. Grabe soils make up about 25 percent of this association; Gila soils, 23 percent; Anthony soils, 22 percent; and minor soils, the remaining 30 percent.

The Grabe and Gila are deep, well drained, and have good available water holding capacity. The Grabe soils commonly have a dark-colored clay loam surface layer and loamy underlying material. The Gila soils commonly have a light-colored loam surface layer and loamy underlying material.

The Anthony soils are deep, well drained, and have fair available moisture holding capacity.

These soils commonly have a light-colored sandy loam surface layer and sandy loam underlying material.

According to the Soil Survey report, most of the soils in this association are well suited for community and industrial uses, but they require some management, depending on the characteristics of the soils. Most of the soil material is suitable for structural use in dams, dikes and roadbeds.

Pinaleno-Bitter, Spring-Trees, Hermanos Association

This association includes deep, nearly level to sloping, gravelly soils of the low terraces. This association consists of smooth, nearly level soils on low terraces and sloping soils on round ridges of the low terraces. These terraces are above the inner valley, and in a few places, large washes have cut into them.

This association extends from the eastern end of the survey area along both sides of the Gila River to the vicinity of Pima. Except for steep escarpments, slopes range from 0 to 5 percent. Elevations range from 2,700 to 3,200 feet above sea level, and the average annual rain fall is about 9 inches. Only a small acreage is irrigated. The vegetation is creosote bush, cholla, some mesquite, and annual grasses and weeds. This association makes up about 11 percent of the Safford Area.

According to the Soil Surveys report, these soils are suitable as sites for community and industrial buildings, and some houses have been built on the terraces north of Safford.



Continental-Gila-Rough-Broken Land Association

This soil association consists primarily of deep, nearly level to gently sloping, gravelly and loamy soils of the low and middle terraces and areas of rough broken land. This association consists of soils on broad terraces and alluvial fans along the south side of the inner valley from Stockton Wash to the northwestern boundary of the Safford Area. Low ridges are on the terraces and washes have cut deep canyons that have steep side slopes. Slopes range from 0 to 60 percent. Elevations range from 2,700 to 3,300 feet, and the average annual rainfall is about 9 inches. The vegetation is creosote bush, snake-weed, saltbush, mesquite, cactus, ocotillo, some tobosa, and annual weeds and grasses. This association makes up about 15 percent of the Safford Area. Continental soils make up about 35 percent of this association; Gila soils, 25 percent; Rough broken land, 20 percent; and minor soils and land types, 20 percent.

According to the Soil Survey report, these soils are suited for community and industrial buildings and for most earthen structures of the kinds needed in engineering. Some of the water from rainfall runs into the sandy washes and recharges the ground water.

Continental-Pinaleno-Cave Association

This association includes nearly level to steep, gravelly soils of the high terraces that are shallow to deep over accumulated lime. This association consists of nearly level to steep soils on high terraces. Slopes range mostly from 0 to 5 percent, but in some places they are more than 30 percent. The terraces are dissected and drained by washes that flow into the Gila River.

These washes have cut deep canyons that have steep side slopes. Elevations range from 2,800 to 4,800 feet, and the average annual rainfall from 9 to 11 inches. The vegetation is mostly creosote bush, white-thorn, cactus, and mesquite, but annual grasses and weeds grow after rainy periods. On the higher parts of the terraces are areas in curly mesquite, tobosa, snake-weed, wolfberry, and many annual plants but only a small amount of creosote bush. This association makes up about 29 percent of the Safford Area. Continental soils make up about 30 percent of this association; Pinaleno soils, 25 percent; Cave soils, 18 percent; and minor soils and land types, 27 percent.

These soils are suited to community and industrial buildings and for most earthen structures of the kinds used in engineering. The Cave soils and Gravelly alluvial land are useful as material for building roads. Some of the water from rainfall and melting snow on this association runs into drainage ways and recharges the ground water.

Graham Association

This soil association includes shallow, gently sloping to steep, rocky soils of the uplands. This association consists of gently sloping to steep soils on long, narrow, rounded ridgetops and the sides of deep canyons on the eastern part of the Gila Mountains. Slopes range from 2 to 40 percent. Elevations range from 3,600 to 4,500 feet, and the average annual rainfall is about 11 inches. The vegetation is mainly tobosa, sideoats, grama, three-awn, palo verde, ocotillo, snakeweed, and cactus, but Mormon tea, haujillo, and a few junipers grow on north-facing slopes. This association makes up about 2 percent of the Safford Area.

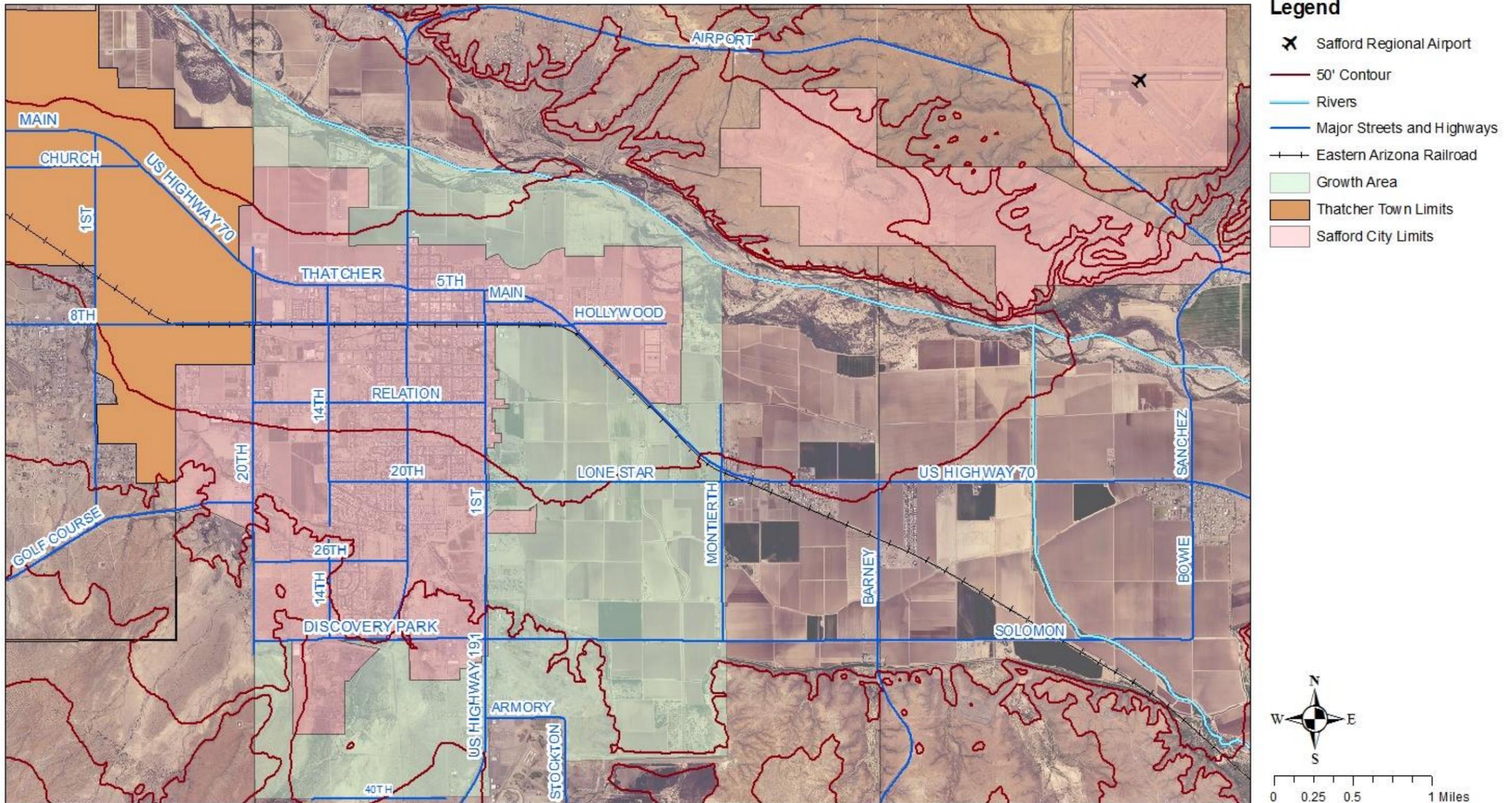
Graham soils make up about 60 percent of this association. The remaining 40 percent consists of bare rock, very shallow soils on steep mountaintops and side slopes, and areas of talus. The Graham soils are mainly on the sides and tops of mountains outside of the Safford Planning Area. These soils are shallow, well drained, and dark reddish brown. They commonly have a very cobbly clay loam surface layer and a gravelly clay loam or clay subsoil. Graham soils formed from weathered basalt and are 12 to 20 inches deep to bedrock. The available moisture holding capacity above the bedrock is very low. Rock crops out along the narrow ridgetops and on steep side slopes.

The soils in this association are used for desert range, wildlife, and water supply. The grasses provide good grazing for cattle, and drinking water is available for most of the year in ponds built on the bottom of canyons. This mountainous association provides food and protection for many kinds of wildlife. Much of the runoff from precipitation flows into drainage ways and recharges the ground water.

Exhibit 2 shows topography.



Exhibit 2: Topography



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016



Document Review

The following documents were reviewed as part of the City of Safford General Plan Update 2015 planning process.

20/20 VISION 2013: WATER SYSTEM PLANNING

The Project 20/20 Vision was originally commissioned in 2000 by the City of Safford in an effort to continuously monitor, evaluate and improve the City's potable water system. It was updated in 2007 and 2013. The 2013 document reflects system upgrades and use data through 2012, expands the discussion of conservation, includes the results of distribution system modeling, and extends the design projects and improvement planning to the years 2022, 2037 and 2062. The evaluation of the water system focuses on three components: source, storage, and distribution.

The City of Safford water system serves an area of over 100 square miles through approximately 250 miles of pipelines. An average flow over the past five years of 2,325 gallons per minute (gpm) serves a 20,500 service area population (based on an estimate of 3 people per residential connection). The current total useable production capacity is 3,600 gpm. The City of Safford should acquire at least 2,200 gpm in additional sources immediately and work toward a goal of 4,220 gpm by 2022.

The City's water sources are groundwater wells located along a river valley and from an infiltration gallery in the bed of Bonita Creek. Almost twenty million gallons of storage is available in seven tanks in excellent condition.

The City should continue its plan to add an additional 1 MG tank. The distribution system is and will remain in constant need of expansion, repair and update as the community grows. Several areas have less than desirable fire flows due to a lack of conveyance capacity, lack of redundant pipelines, and undersized pipes. The area's per capita water consumption is relatively high; reduction of potable water use through education, conservation measures, rate structure adjustment, and the increased reuse of reclaimed wastewater should be top priorities.

SAFFORD REGIONAL AIRPORT 2006 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The airport master plan update, prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, provides an objective look at future airport needs based on a comprehensive review of design considerations, and an assessment of the current and future airport role in order to provide direction and guidance regarding future airport development priorities. This plan has not been approved. Major elements of the plan are: Public Information Program, Environmental Considerations, Existing Conditions, Aviation Forecasts, Facility Requirements, Alternatives Development and Evaluation, Airport Layout Plans, Facilities Implementation Plan, and Financial Feasibility Analysis.



The plan also addresses several issues pertaining to the role and function of the Airport including:

- Existing airport facilities, equipment and operating conditions;
- Local and regional socio-economic characteristics, trends and development patterns;
- Aeronautical activity forecasts;
- Immediate and long-term facility requirements and design alternatives;
- Preferred long-term airfield, terminal area and access development strategy;
- Commercial opportunities and infrastructure needs;
- Coordination of land use controls to preserve surrounding environment and protect airport infrastructure;
- Environmental consequences for proposed development;
- Development program estimated project costs;
- Operational management needs to implement planning goals; and
- Development of a financing program to meet the needs of the Airport Capital Improvement Program.

The Plan update identifies a schedule of needs that is consistent with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and airspace criteria and ADOT aviation policy standards existing at the time the plan was created. The Plan allows the City of Safford to implement projects in a coordinated manner and apply for airport development grants. This Airport plan is a pre-recession plan. It is ten years old, and it was never approved.

CITY OF SAFFORD AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN UPDATE, DRAFT FINAL REPORT, MAY 2012

The current ALP Update study began in May 2011 and was prepared by C&S Engineers. The FAA, ADOT and the City of Safford have made great progress in completing many of the projects identified in the FAA-approved 2000 Master Plan. Due to the completion of a majority of these projects, in addition to a change in project priorities, an update to the plan is required. From 2006 to 2008 a draft Master Plan Update and accompanying ALP update were prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates but not finalized or approved.

The objective of the ALP Update is to determine the extent, type, and schedule of development needed to accommodate existing needs and future aviation demand at the Airport, and then produce a set of updated airport layout plan drawings that depict the proposed development.

The recommended development is presented in three planning periods: short term (2012-2016), intermediate term (2017-2021), and long term (2022-2031). The study provides updated aviation demand forecasts and facility requirements for the next twenty years. It assesses requirements for both the airside (runway, taxiways, safety and object free areas, runway protection zones, and navigation aids) and landside (hangars, aircraft parking apron, terminal building, fuel storage, automobile parking, and possibly the FBO areas).



The narrative report summarizes the following:

- Existing Airport conditions;
- Key issues, forecasts of aviation activity;
- Facility requirements; and
- Financial management and development plan.

The ALP drawing set includes a depiction of the existing airport layout; a layout plan showing the proposed 20-year development plan; a terminal area plan depicting landside development; an airspace and approach and obstruction plans; a land use and ground access plan; and an airport property map.

COMMUNITYID FINAL REPORT, JULY 2007

Community ID is a program that is designed specifically for use in community development initiatives. The Buxton Company used it to examine the potential for Safford to attract new retailers and restaurants. The Final Report identifies specific retailers and restaurants that are most likely to consider Safford as a potential location. The proposed retail site selected by Safford for study is at 6th Street and 5th Avenue.

Buxton examined thousands of retailers and restaurants to determine those with location requirements that best match the buying habits and demographics within the site's retail trade area. The initial list of hundreds was narrowed to 67 targets based on additional research.

Finally, Buxton and the City of Safford met to make a final selection of twenty retailers and restaurants for which marketing packages would be prepared. Factors considered included overall desirability, community preferences, the potential tenant mix and other issues specific to the economic development goals of Safford.

GILA VALLEY ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND TARGETED INDUSTRY ASSESSMENT, APRIL 2012

The Gila Valley Economic Analysis and Targeted Industry Assessment was prepared for Graham County and the communities of Safford, Thatcher and Pima by IO, Inc. and Elliott D. Pollack and Company. It analyzed the Gila Valley regional economy, made recommendations for economic diversification, identified appropriate targeted industry sectors, and developed a strategic framework for the Gila Valley.

Gila Valley assets include strong economic pillars in mining, agriculture, astronomy and corrections; an expansive trade area; university presence; excellent K-12 schools; and expansive wilderness and outdoor recreational offerings, among others. The assessment notes that more population growth is necessary to achieve critical mass to support economic expansion and growth, as there is currently a limited tax base.



Employment in the major sectors of mining, agriculture and government are disproportionately high, reflecting a need to diversify. Household incomes are below average for Arizona, poverty levels are above the state average, and the workforce participation rate is below average.

Foundations for economic development in the Gila Valley will include:

- Grow/expand the population base;
- Increase tourism and visitor activity;
- Attract and grow new firms and enterprises in high-growth sectors such as remote control technologies and customer contact centers;
- Build on existing strengths by retaining and growing mining, agriculture, astronomy, education, and healthcare; and
- Elevate Gila Valley's economic development competitiveness.

PRELIMINARY FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS: FISCAL YEARS 2016-2020

This project list was last updated on February 23, 2015 and covers fiscal years 2016 through 2020. It includes desired capital improvement projects in General Government such as police, library, finance, and information technology; and public works such as streets, parks, and sanitation.

The Enterprise Fund Projects include projects in water, wastewater, wastewater treatment plant, gas, electric, and landfill. Total funds for the planned projects are \$31,976,569.

GRAHAM COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY, 2007 AND 2015

In 2007, a Graham County Transit Feasibility Review was completed to determine the need and feasibility for starting public transportation service. At the completion of the study, Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 funding was not pursued. The region had very active and well-funded Section 5310/5316/5317 programs at the time. That environment has changed significantly with a number of providers and/or services being reduced. As a result, transportation service is primarily provided only to seniors and/or individuals with disabilities. This has resulted in the exclusion of a large portion of the transit needs populace. There are virtually no services available to the below poverty/mobility limited population in need of transportation to work, social services, medical services, behavioral health services, education centers, and shopping centers.

The 2015 feasibility study updates the findings of the 2007 study and addresses the following questions:

- Is there community support and adequate potential ridership for a viable public transit system in Graham County?
- Does sufficient local or other financial support exist to provide necessary matching funds for federal funding to

financially sustain transit services over time?

- Does a viable governance structure exist or can one be created to govern, manage and comply with federal funding regulations?
- Is there the potential to leverage existing funding for transportation in Graham County and coordinate and add value to existing social service agency transportation services with a public transit service?
- Do the benefits of providing a public transit system outweigh the costs of service delivery?

The 2015 study update includes two phases. Phase one includes a feasibility review that answers the above five questions to determine if implementing public transit service is feasible in Graham County. Phase two is based on a go/no-go recommendation from phase one includes the development of a detailed service plan for implementing transit service. More information regarding this study is provided in the Transportation/Circulation chapter of this document.



OTHER DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

In addition to those documents mentioned above, the following documents were reviewed as part of the Safford General Plan Update:

- City of Safford General Plan 2004
- Official Zoning Map of the City of Safford
- The Revised Zoning Ordinance of the City of Safford, Arizona
- Downtown Safford Vision and Design Charrette, 2007
- Downtown Safford: A Challenge for Today/A Vision for Tomorrow Downtown Revitalization Plan, 2003
- City of Safford Centennial Project Downtown Master Plan, 1999
- Town of Thatcher General Plan
- Graham County Comprehensive Plan
- Analysis for East Central Arizona (Graham and Greenlee Counties) 2013
- Arizona Department of Transportation US 191 (SR 266 to US 70) Corridor Study and Environmental Review, 2012
- Mount Graham Marketplace Community Master Plan, 2008
- Welker Farms Community Master Plan, 2008
- Renewable Energy Opportunity Analysis Summary Report: Solar Facility Siting
- Scenarios for the Upper Gila Watershed
- City of Safford Annual Drinking Water Quality Reports
- Sources listed in their respective chapters.



Demographics and Housing

Table 1 shows population estimates as of July 1, 2014 based on Population Estimates for Arizona’s Counties, Incorporated Places and Unincorporated Balance of Counties. These population estimates are the official estimates from the Office of Employment and Population Statistics, from the Arizona Department of Administration. Population estimates are published once a year near the end of the calendar year for the State, counties, and incorporated places.

Table 1: Population Estimates, July 1, 2014

Place	Population Estimate 2014
Graham County	38,315
Pima	2,479
Safford	9,734
Thatcher	5,113
Unincorporated	20,989

Source: Office of Employment & Population Statistics, Arizona Department of Administration, 2014

Table 2: Population Counts 2010 and Population Projections 2015-2050

	Census 2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Graham County*	37,220	38,569	41,240	43,922	46,610	49,270	51,887	54,505	57,196
Places									
Pima	2,387	2,428	2,578	2,728	2,878	3,026	3,171	3,316	3,465
Safford	9,566	9,627	10,110	10,592	11,073	11,545	12,006	12,465	12,939
Thatcher	4,865	4,997	5,292	5,588	5,884	6,176	6,462	6,748	7,042
Unincorporated (Balance of County)	20,402	21,517	23,260	25,014	26,775	28,523	30,249	31,977	33,750

Source: Office of Employment & Population Statistics, Arizona Department of Administration, 2014



City of Safford General Plan

Table 3: 2010 Census Population Characteristics - Race and Ethnicity

Place	2010 Population Count	Percent
White	2,831	29.6
Hispanic or Latino	4,166	43.6
Black or African American	207	2.2
American Indian and Alaska Native	254	2.7
Asian	125	1.3
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	13	0.1
Other Races/Ethnicities Combined	1,970	20.5
Total	9,566	100

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

According to the US Census Bureau 2010 population counts, of the total 9,566 person living within Safford, 4643, or 48.5 percent were males and 4,923, or 51.5 percent were female. While the median age of the male population was 30.2, the median age of the female cohort was 33.9. The median age of the total population in Safford was 31.6 years old. This is lower than the national median age of 37.2 in the same year.

Table 4: 2010 Census Population Characteristics – Age

AGE	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	878	9.2
5 to 9 years	767	8.0
10 to 14 years	753	7.9
15 to 19 years	762	8.0
20 to 24 years	738	7.7
25 to 29 years	681	7.1
30 to 34 years	529	5.5
35 to 39 years	541	5.7
40 to 44 years	510	5.3
45 to 49 years	505	5.3
50 to 54 years	569	5.9
55 to 59 years	505	5.3
60 to 64 years	429	4.5
65 to 69 years	373	3.9
70 to 74 years	342	3.6
75 to 79 years	275	2.9
80 to 84 years	215	2.2
85 years and over	194	2.0
Total population	9,566	100

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data



City of Safford General Plan

Table 5: 2010 Census Population Characteristics – Age

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5 Years	878	9.2
5 to 19	2,282	23.9
20 to 34	1,948	20.4
35 to 64	3,059	32.0
65 to 84	1,205	12.6
85 years and over	194	2.0
Total population	9,566	100

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

Table 6: 2010 Census Population Characteristics – Age

Age	Number	Percent
Under 35	5,108	53.4
35 to 64	3,059	32.0
65 and over	1,399	14.6
Total population	9,566	100.0

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

As provided in Table 6, of the 9,566 persons living in Safford in 2010, a total of 5,108, or 53.4 percent were under 35 years of age, 3,059, or 32 percent, were 35 to 64, and a total of 1,399 were 65 and older. As indicated by the demographic trends, the largest population cohort in the City encompasses people from 35 to 64, which indicates a strong workforce presence.

Table 7: 2010 Census - Relationship

RELATIONSHIP	Number	Percent
Total population	9,566	100.0
In households	9,322	97.4
Householder	3,385	35.4
Spouse [1]	1,557	16.3
Child	3,133	32.8
Own child under 18 years	2,377	24.8
Other relatives	758	7.9
Under 18 years	414	4.3
65 years and over	56	0.6
Nonrelatives	489	5.1
Under 18 years	71	0.7
65 years and over	11	0.1
Unmarried partner	249	2.6
In group quarters [2]	244	2.6
Institutionalized population [3]	235	2.5
- Male (Institutionalized)	174	1.8
- Female (Institutionalized)	61	0.6
Non-institutionalized population [4]	9	0.1
- Male	4	0.0
- Female	5	0.1

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

[1] **"Spouse"** represents spouse of the householder. It does not reflect all spouses in a household.

[2] **"Group Quarters"** is defined by the US Census Bureau as all U.S. residents who live in group living facilities including correctional institutions, juvenile facilities, skilled nursing facilities, college residence halls, military barracks, group homes, and workers' dormitories.

[3] **"Institutionalized Population"** is defined by the US Census Bureau as all U.S. civilians residing in institutional group quarters facilities such as correctional institutions and juvenile facilities.

[4] **"Noninstitutionalized Population"** is defined by the US Census Bureau as all U.S. civilians not residing in institutional group quarters facilities such as correctional institutions, juvenile facilities, skilled nursing facilities, and other long-term care living arrangements.



HOUSEHOLDS

Table 8: 2010 Census – Households by Type

Household Type	Number of Households	Percent
Total Households	3,385	100.0
Family households (families) [5]	2,358	69.7
With own children under 18 years	1,130	33.4
Husband-wife family	1,557	46.0
With own children under 18 years	662	19.6
Male householder, no wife present	210	6.2
With own children under 18 years	122	3.6
Female householder, no husband present	591	17.5
With own children under 18 years	346	10.2
Nonfamily households [6]	1,027	30.3
Householder living alone	880	26.0
Male	381	11.3
65 years and over	108	3.2
Female	499	14.7
65 years and over	287	8.5
Households with individuals under 18 years	1,334	39.4
Households with individuals 65 years and over	998	29.5

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

[5] "Family households" consist of a householder and one or more other people related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

[6] "Nonfamily households" consist of people living alone and households which do not have any members related to the householder (example student housing).

As provided in Table 8, of the 3,385 households counted in Safford in 2010, a total of 2,358, or 69.7 percent were family households. This is higher than the national family household total of 66.4 percent. Of the 3,385 households counted in Safford in 2010, a total of 1,027, or 30.3 percent, were nonfamily households. This is lower than the national non-family household total of 33.6 percent.

Of the 3,385 households, a total of 1,334, or 39.4 percent, were households with individuals under 18 years. This total is higher than the national total of 33.4 households with individuals under 18 years.

Of the 3,385 households, a total of 998, or 29.5 percent, were households with individuals 65 years or older. This total is higher than the national total of 24.9 households with individuals 65 and older.

The average household size in 2010 was 2.75 people per household. This is higher than the national average household size of 2.58 persons per household in the same year.

The average family size in 2010 was 3.31 persons per family. This is higher than the total national average family size of 3.14 persons per family.



HOUSING OCCUPANCY

Table 9: 2010 Census – Housing Occupancy

Occupancy Type	Total Housing Units	Percent
Total Housing Units	3,908	100.0
Occupied housing units	3,385	86.6
Vacant housing units	523	13.4
For rent	165	4.2
Rented, not occupied	9	0.2
For sale only	101	2.6
Sold, not occupied	11	0.3
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	54	1.4
All other vacant units	183	4.7

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

As provided in Table 9, of the 3,908 housing units counted in Safford in 2010, a total of 3,385, or 86.6 percent were occupied and a total of 523 units, or 13.4 percent, were vacant. The percent of occupied housing units at national level was 88.6, and the percent of vacant units at national level was 11.4 in the same year.

In 2010, Safford had a homeowner vacancy rate of 4.3 percent and a rental vacancy rate of 12 percent. The national homeowner vacancy rate was 2.4, and the national rental vacancy rate for the same year was 9.2.

The homeowner vacancy rate is the proportion of the homeowner inventory that is vacant "for sale." It is computed by dividing the total number of vacant units "for sale only" by the sum of owner-occupied units, vacant units that are "for sale only," and vacant units that have been sold but not yet occupied; and then multiplying by 100.

The rental vacancy rate is the proportion of the rental inventory that is vacant "for rent." It is computed by dividing the total number of vacant units "for rent" by the sum of the renter-occupied units, vacant units that are "for rent," and vacant units that have been rented but not yet occupied; and then multiplying by 100.

HOUSING TENURE

Table 10 shows owner occupied and renter-occupied housing in the City of Safford in 2010 according to 2010 Census counts.

Table 10: 2010 Census – Housing Tenure

Housing Tenure	Number of Housing Units	Percent
Total Occupied housing units	3,385	100.0
Owner-occupied housing units	2,260	66.8
Renter-occupied housing units	1,125	33.2

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

Of the 3,385 housing units located within the City of Safford’s corporate boundary in 2010, a total of 2,260, or 66.8 percent, were owner-occupied and a total of 1,125, or 33.2 percent, were renter-occupied. The rate of owner-occupied housing units at national level was 65.1 percent, and the rate for renter-occupied housing units at national level was 34.9 percent for the same year.

The total population living in owner-occupied housing units in Safford in 2010 was 6,335 persons and the average household size of owner-occupied housing units was 2.80 persons per owner-occupied housing unit. This average

household size is higher than the national average household size for owner-occupied housing units which was 2.65 persons per owner-occupied unit.

The total population living in renter-occupied housing units in Safford in 2010 was 2,987 persons and the average household size of renter occupied units was 2.66 persons per renter-occupied housing unit. This average household size of renter-occupied units is higher than the national average household size for renter-occupied units which was 2.44 in the same year.

SUMMARY

Table 11 compares 2000 and 2010 Census counts. In the ten year period from 2000 to 2010, the population in Safford grew a total of 334 persons. This is approximately a total of 33.4 persons per year. The 2010 Census reports an increase of 54 households. A total of 190 additional housing units were reported in 2010. The average household size also increased from 2.70 persons per household in 2000 to 2.75 persons per household in 2010.

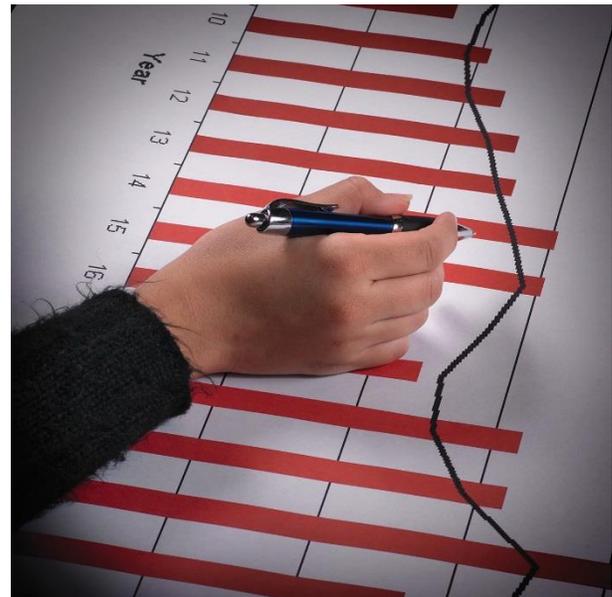
At national level, the average household size decreased from 2.59 persons per household in 2000 to 2.58 persons per household in 2010. The average household size in Safford increased from 2.70 to 2.75 persons per household during the same period. This increase in household size may be attributed to the increase in the Hispanic or Latino population from 3,667 in 2000 to 4,166 in 2010, with a total increase of 449 persons. The extended-family household type is common among this population.

Table 11: 2010 Census – Housing Tenure

Category	2000	2010
Population	9,232	9,566
Households	3,331	3,385
Housing Units	3,718	3,908
Vacant Housing Units	387	523
Occupied housing units	3,331	3,385
Average Household Size	2.70	2.75

Source: United States Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data

The relative slow growth experienced from 2000 to 2010 is anticipated to change as the City of Safford positions itself as the Southeastern Arizona Gila Valley Gateway and markets the region for the job attraction, revenue generating uses, and economic development expansion needed to achieve long-range viability.





Transportation & Circulation

This section describes the existing transportation systems in the Safford area, including functional classifications, traffic volumes, transportation projects completed since the 2004 General Plan, transportation issues, and transportation projects recommended in the City of Safford Transportation Study completed in 2007.

MAJOR ROADWAYS AND FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of traffic service that they are intended to provide. Functional classifications also account for the inverse relationship between access and mobility. The City of Safford uses three functional classification categories: arterial, collector and local streets.

Safford Arterial Roadways

Major arterials in the Safford area are US 70, US 191, 20th Avenue, and Discovery Park Boulevard. US 70 is an east-west route that runs between the New Mexico border near Franklin to Junction 60 in Globe, Arizona. US 191 is an east-west route that runs between the US/Mexico border near Douglas to the Utah border.

A north-south route, 20th Avenue connects Discovery Park Boulevard to US 70. This roadway is a major thoroughfare on the west side of the

city and it is the route to the Mount Graham Regional Hospital, health care facilities, as well as major shopping centers and the Safford High School. Discovery Park Boulevard is an east-west route that connects US 191 to 20th Avenue.

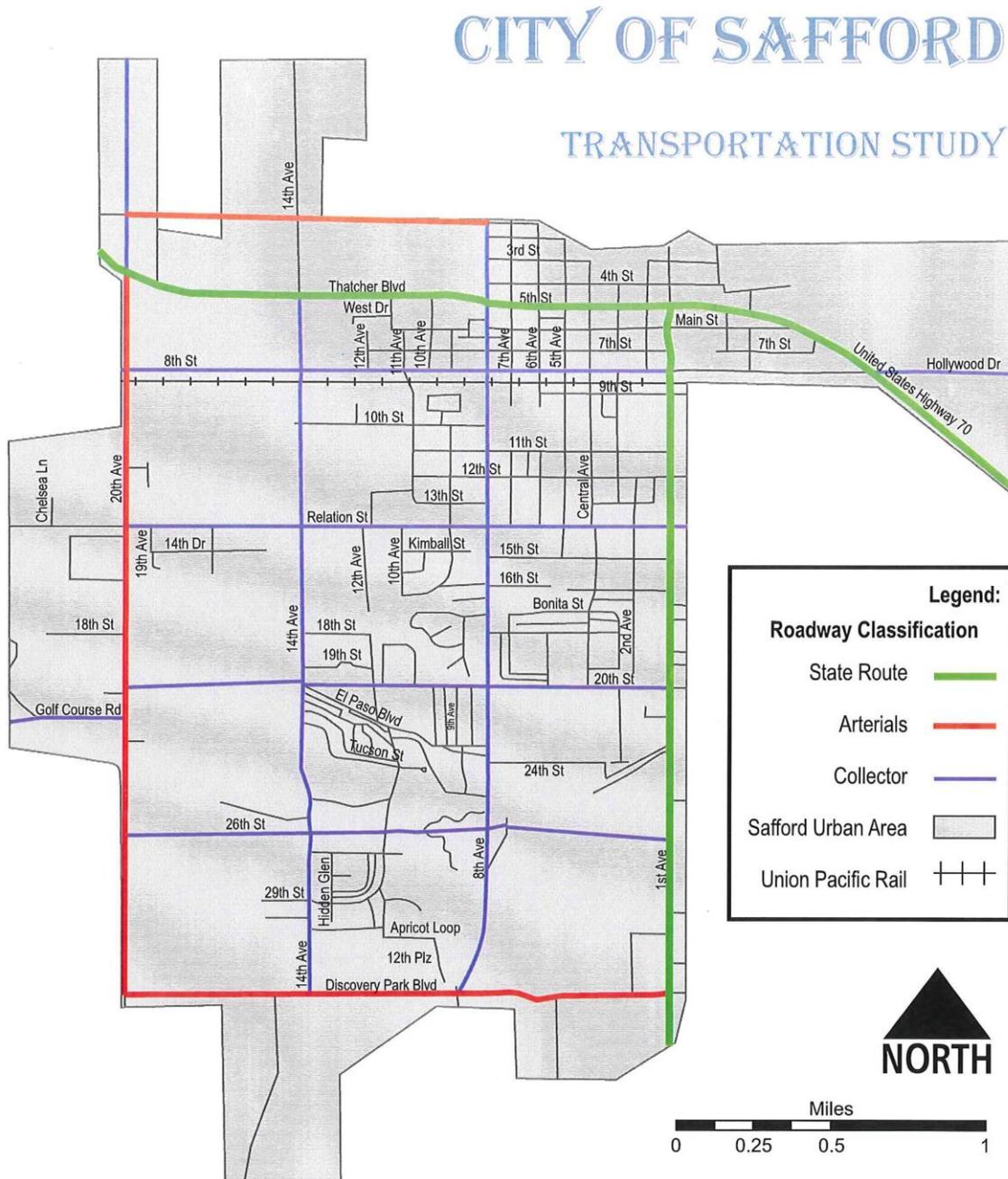
Safford Collector Roadways

Key collector streets in the Safford area include:

- 26th Street
- 20th Street
- 20th Avenue north of US 70
- 14th Avenue
- Relation Street
- 8th Avenue
- 8th Street
- Hollywood Drive
- Golf Course Road

Exhibit 3 shows functionally classified roadways in the Safford area.

Exhibit 3: Functionally Classified Roadways in the City of Safford



Source: City of Safford Transportation Study, 2007



TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic counts are shown in Table 12 for arterial roadways. Traffic counts on 20th Avenue and Discovery Park Blvd were obtained from the South Eastern Arizona Association of Governments (SEAGO) Transportation Data Management System.

SEAGO undertakes traffic volume counts for the region. Traffic counts on US 70 and US 191 were obtained from the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Table 12- Average Daily Traffic Counts on Arterial Roads in the Safford Area

Route	Between		Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume, vehicles per day	Year
20th Avenue	US 70	8 th Street	11,636	2012
20th Avenue	8 th Street	Relation Street	9,847	2012
20th Avenue	Relation Street	26 th Street	6,866	2012
20th Avenue	26 th Street	Discovery Park Blvd	3,144	2012
Discovery Park Blvd	20 th Avenue	8 th Avenue	3,266	2012
Discovery Park Blvd	8 th Avenue	US 191	4,412	2012
US 70	20 th Avenue	14 th Avenue	22,768	2014
US 70	14 th Avenue	8 th Avenue	22,054	2014
US 70	8 th Avenue	US 191 south	16,881	2014
US 191	Relation Street/14th Street	US 70	9,273	2014
US 191	Upper Solomonville Rd	Relation Street/14th Street	7,860	2014

Source: Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO), Transportation Data Management System and Arizona Department of Transportation, 2014

Note: Traffic counts are averaged between segments, where multiple traffic counts exist.

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS COMPLETED SINCE THE 2004 GENERAL PLAN

Major transportation projects constructed since the adoption of the 2004 Safford General Plan include:

- **8th Street Bridge Reconstruction.**
- **8th Avenue Extension.**
Extension of 8th Avenue to Discovery Park Boulevard
- **20th Avenue Improvements.**
Widening of 20th Avenue to three lanes between 8th Street and Relation Street and four lanes between 8th Street and US 70.
- **8th Street/20th Avenue Intersection Improvements.**
- **26th Street Extension.**
Extension of 26th Street from 20th Avenue to 8th Avenue
- **Gila River Bridge Reconstruction** (in cooperation with Graham County)
- **Main Street improvements.**
Improvements completed in 2015 on Main Street include special paving and bulb-outs at key intersections, upgraded traffic signals, and landscaping.



Safford Main Street Improvements

TRANSPORTATION CIRCULATION ISSUES

Transportation planning issues that were raised during discussions with City staff and review of planning documents include the following:

Roadway improvements to support planned growth. Examples include provision of access to planned annexation areas, and circulation strategies for expansion of commercial corridors. Examples include future extension of 1st Street, between 20th Avenue and 8th Avenue, to provide an alternate route to US 70 and support future development. Another example is the provision of adequately sized transportation facilities to support the development of undeveloped sites north of 8th Street and to the County line.

Downtown Area Circulation. The Circulation Element will support the continuing redevelopment and growth within the downtown area and will include policies to support the many special events that are held downtown throughout the year. Improvements recently completed on Main Street include special paving and bulb-outs at key intersections, upgraded traffic signals, and landscaping to make the downtown area more attractive, walkable, and safer for visitors and residents.

Overall Circulation.

Road circulation and maintaining the functional classification role of roads is of primary importance. In a well-defined circulation system, collector streets provide connections to local streets and maximize citywide connectivity. Safford lacks east-west corridors, especially in the southern part of the City. These east-west corridors are necessary to improve overall circulation in the City.



Additionally, north-south road extensions are also needed to alleviate traffic and support future development.

Proposed east-west road extensions include:

- Solomon Road from US 191 to Montierth Lane
- 26th Street from 8th Avenue to US 191 and from US 191 to Montierth Lane
- 20th Street from US 191 to Montierth Lane
- Relation Street from US Highway 191 to US Highway 70
- Hollywood Drive from Us Highway 70 to Montierth Lane
- 1st Street from US Highway 70 to proposed extension of Welker Lane
- Future US Highway 191 along the Gila River

Proposed north-west road extensions include:

- 14th Avenue north of US Highway 70 to support development.
- Welker Lane from Solomon Road to north of US Highway 70
- Montierth Lane from Solomon Road to Hollywood Drive
- US Highway 191 north of US Highway 70
- 20th Avenue north of US Highway 70

Special Considerations:

- Need for railroad crossings in future development plans. There are approximately two trains a day and 10-15 railroad crossings within the City limits.
- The intersection of 8th Avenue, Airport Road and Safford Bryce Road may be improved by Graham County in conjunction with a new jail. A roundabout is an option for this intersection.
- Potential to extend 20th Avenue south of Discovery Park Boulevard to support future development, but not in conjunction with a proposed state bypass.

CITY OF SAFFORD TRANSPORTATION STUDY (2007)

The City of Safford Transportation Study, completed in 2007, identified future transportation improvements needs for short term, medium term and long term planning periods.

The recommended transportation improvement projects to address anticipated traffic demands are summarized by time period as follows:

Short Term Projects

(0 to 5 years or 2007 to 2012)

- Hollywood Drive from US Highway 70 to east City Limits - improve to collector standards
- Intersection of Hollywood Road and US Highway 70 - install traffic signal
- Relation Street from 14th Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- Intersection of Relation Street and 20th Avenue - install traffic signal
- 20th Street from 17th Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- 26th Street from 1st Avenue to 8th Avenue - improve to collector standards (by others)
- 26th Street from 10th Avenue to 12th Avenue - improve to collector standards (by others)
- Relation Street from 1st Avenue to 14th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- 20th Avenue from Relation Street to Discovery Park Blvd - improve to arterial standards
- Discovery Park Blvd from 1st Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to arterial standards
- First Street from 8th Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to arterial standards



- Two traffic signal installations (locations to be determined)
- Traffic signal warrant studies (8th Street, Relation Street, 20th Street and major intersections)
- Design Concept reports

Medium Term Projects

(6 to 10 years or 2013 to 2017)

- 8th Street from 8th Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- 14th Avenue from 20th Street to Highline Canal - improve to collector standards
- 14th Avenue from Highline Canal to 24th Street - improve to collector standards
- 14th Avenue from 26th Street to 30th Street - improve to collector standards
- 14th Avenue from 30th Street to Discovery Park Blvd. - improve to collector standards
- 26th Street, from 12th Avenue to 20th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- 8th Avenue, 26th Street to Discovery Park Blvd. - improve to collector standards
- 8th Avenue from 8th Street to Relation Street - improve to collector standards
- 8th Street from 1st Avenue to Relation Street - improve to collector standards
- Golf Course Road from 800 feet west of 20th Avenue to West City limits - improve to collector standards
- Two Project studies
- Traffic Signal at 8th Avenue and 8th Street
- One Traffic Signal installation (location to be determined)

Long Term Projects

(11 to 20 years or 2018-2027)

- 20th Street from 1st Avenue to 14th Avenue - improve to collector standards
- Two new traffic signals (locations to be determined)

US HIGHWAY 191 CORRIDOR STUDY (SR 266 TO US 70)

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) partnered with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) along with other agencies to improve US 191 from SR 266 to US 70 in 2012. The study team follows both state and federal guidelines when planning and designing the proposed roadway.

The FHWA requires ADOT to conduct a planning study that considers the traffic volumes expected 30 years in the future. If a study of this type shows that improvements—such as shoulders, turn lanes, additional thru lanes, access control and/or grade-separated access—are required for the safe and efficient movement of traffic, ADOT would determine the needs and present this information to the affected agencies and local community. The study conducted to date suggests there is a need to either improve US 191, between SR 266 and US 70, or construct a new corridor.

According to the 1990 and 2000 Census, the population growth rate in Graham County is 2.34 percent per year. Generally annual traffic growth exceeds population growth; however, to be conservative, the historical traffic growth factor of 2.0 percent per year was used.

Based on historical growth, the existing highways will need additional lanes and access control by 2040. Therefore, identifying and studying alternative corridors is an important step in developing a long-range plan and meeting future traffic needs.



The study demonstrated that the necessary improvements along the existing US 191 would not be a reasonable option in the more densely developed sections of this corridor. There are a number of challenges along the segment of US 191 from Discovery Park Road to US Highway 70.

The existing right-of-way is very narrow and, therefore, widening would require the acquisition and removal of a number of businesses and residences along this stretch of US 191. In consideration of the cost and the disruption to existing businesses and residents, ADOT decided to look at alternative corridors for US 191. The ADOT proposed alternative corridor was anticipated to extend from Artesia Road, northwest bypassing both the City of Safford and the Town of Thatcher, and connecting with US Highway 70 along Cemetery Road/Layton Road.

US HIGHWAY 191: A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE

Anticipating the need to widen US Highway 191 and provide an alternative corridor that best serves the needs of the City of Safford, the Town of Thatcher and the Gila Valley region, the City of Safford have been acquiring properties along US Highway 191.

During the Safford General Plan Update Design Charrette, engineers from the City of Safford, the Town of Thatcher and the Graham County Flood Control District met to brainstorm about an alternative corridor that could improve US Highway 191 while opening opportunities for development in the region.

One recommendation offered during the Safford General Plan Design Charrette was to work with ADOT, FHWA, Graham County Flood Control District, Town of Thatcher, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona State Land Department, Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA,

and property owners to engage in a multidisciplinary and integrated planning process that considers an alternative corridor for Highway 191 along the Gila River in conjunction with a Gila River Restoration Project to:

- Remove invasive salt cedar trees
- Reintroduce native trees
- Provide habitat restoration for endangered birds and other animals
- Construct a new levee to remove properties from the floodplain
- Develop a regional sports complex and regional recreation opportunities along the Gila River
- Provide a sustainable tool for hazard mitigation, and property and life protection that includes flood protection, fire prevention, and water conservation
- Open the North of Safford and Town of Thatcher for economic development

This type of integrated approach to planning, transportation, river restoration, infrastructure, regional recreation, and economic development may result in the cost-effective improvements needed to strengthen the economic viability of the region while improving the capacity and safety of the transportation network.



Invasive Salt Cedar species along the Gila River Corridor, Safford, Arizona.

ALTERNATE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities contribute to encouraging healthy lifestyles and physical fitness, as well as providing transportation options to jobs, schools, residences, and shopping. In some cases, it means that residents drive less, which means less air pollution from vehicle emissions.

The City of Safford has an extensive shared use path system. The City of Safford owns and maintains approximately 6.4 miles of shared use paths. The shared use path system offers residents multiple recreation opportunities, such as walking, bicycling, and in-line skating. **Exhibit 4** shows shared use path system Safford.

Goals for the shared use path system include further expansion to the Gila River and development of the path system to the west, to Eastern Arizona College. As new roadway facilities are constructed, options for incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be considered. Examples of pedestrian and bicycle facilities are included in Table 13.



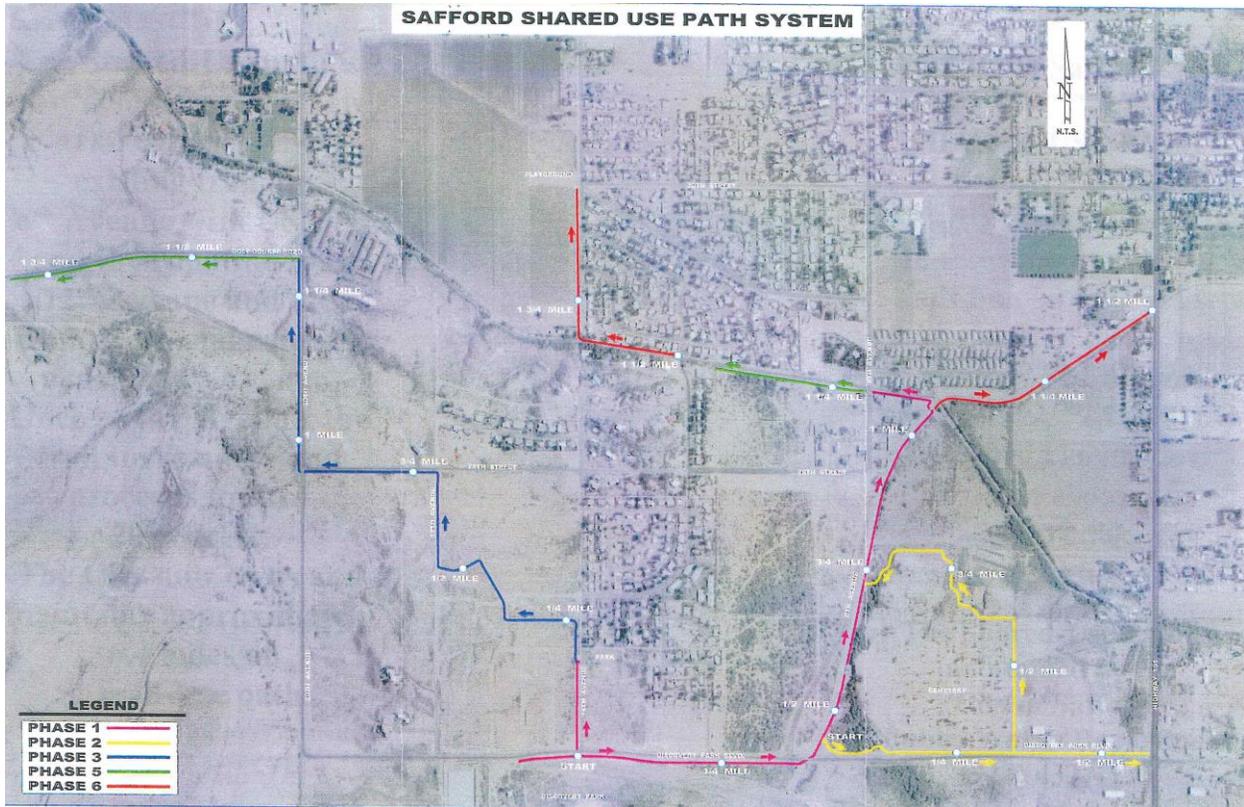
Table 13- Types of Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Facility	Characteristics
Striped Bike Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive-use area adjacent to the outer most travel lane • Typical width: 4' to 5' (preferred)
Wide Outside Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra width in outermost travel lane • Best on roadways with speed limits of 35 mph or higher and moderate to high daily traffic volumes • Typical width: 14' outside lane preferred
Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement markings on lanes to indicate shared space for bicyclists and motorists • Should be used on roads where bicycle lanes are desirable but impossible due to pre-existing constraints • Typical spacing: 100-250 feet along corridor
Sidewalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated space within right-of-way for pedestrians • Should include a landscaped buffer from roadway • Typical width: 5' preferred (ADA Compliant)
Paved Shoulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional pavement adjacent to travel lane • Extends service life of road and provides greater safety and comfort for bicyclists • Typical width: 4' (no minimum width required) • In rural areas with low traffic, can be used by pedestrians
Shared use Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separated from traffic and located in open space or adjacent to road with more setback and width than sidewalks • Typical width: 10-14' preferred



Shared Use Path along Irrigation Canals, City of Safford General Plan Design Charrette, Safford, Arizona, October 19-24, 2015, The Planning Center

Exhibit 4: City of Safford Shared-Use Path System



Source: City of Safford Planning and Development Services Department, Safford, Arizona, 2015.

TRANSIT

Transit information was obtained primarily from the ongoing 2015 Transit Feasibility Study discussed in this section.

Social Service Transit Providers

A number of social service providers provide transportation services in the region. The Southeastern Arizona Community Action Program (SEACAP) provides transportation services in the Safford, Pima and Thatcher area. SEACAP provides dial-a-ride service to meet the needs of the elderly and disabled, and also serves the general public on a space available basis.

The services are utilized for trips to congregate meal sites, doctor visits, dialysis, grocery shopping and Department of Economic Security (DES) visits. SEACAP serves approximately 15-16 one-way passenger trips a day.

In Graham County, the Easter Seals Blake Foundation’s SAGE Division provides residential, employment and day program services for individuals with developmental disabilities. SAGE provides transportation to and from day programs, residential programs, individual homes and for a variety of recreational purposes. SAGE also provides seniors with the opportunity to travel to and from the Apache Gold Casino in San Carlos, Arizona, the fourth



Friday of the month. This service is paid for by the Blake Foundation. In collaboration with SEACAP, SAGE provides back-up transportation to SEACAP when they cannot provide transportation to clients due to vehicle availability, or vacation or illness of SEACAP drivers.

Regional Public Transit

In 2007, a Graham County Transit Feasibility Review was completed to determine the need and feasibility for starting public transportation service. At the completion of the study, Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 funding was not pursued because the complexity of the funding and management issues were not resolved. Additionally, the region had very active and well-funded Section 5310/5316/5317 programs at the time. That environment has changed significantly with a number of providers and/or services being reduced.

Currently a 2015 Transit Feasibility Study is underway. The study is being completed in two phases. Phase one includes a feasibility review to determine if implementing public transit service is feasible in Graham County. This phase of work has been completed and Phase two will be conducted based on the recommendation from phase one (go/no go) and will include the development of a detailed service plan for implementing transit service.

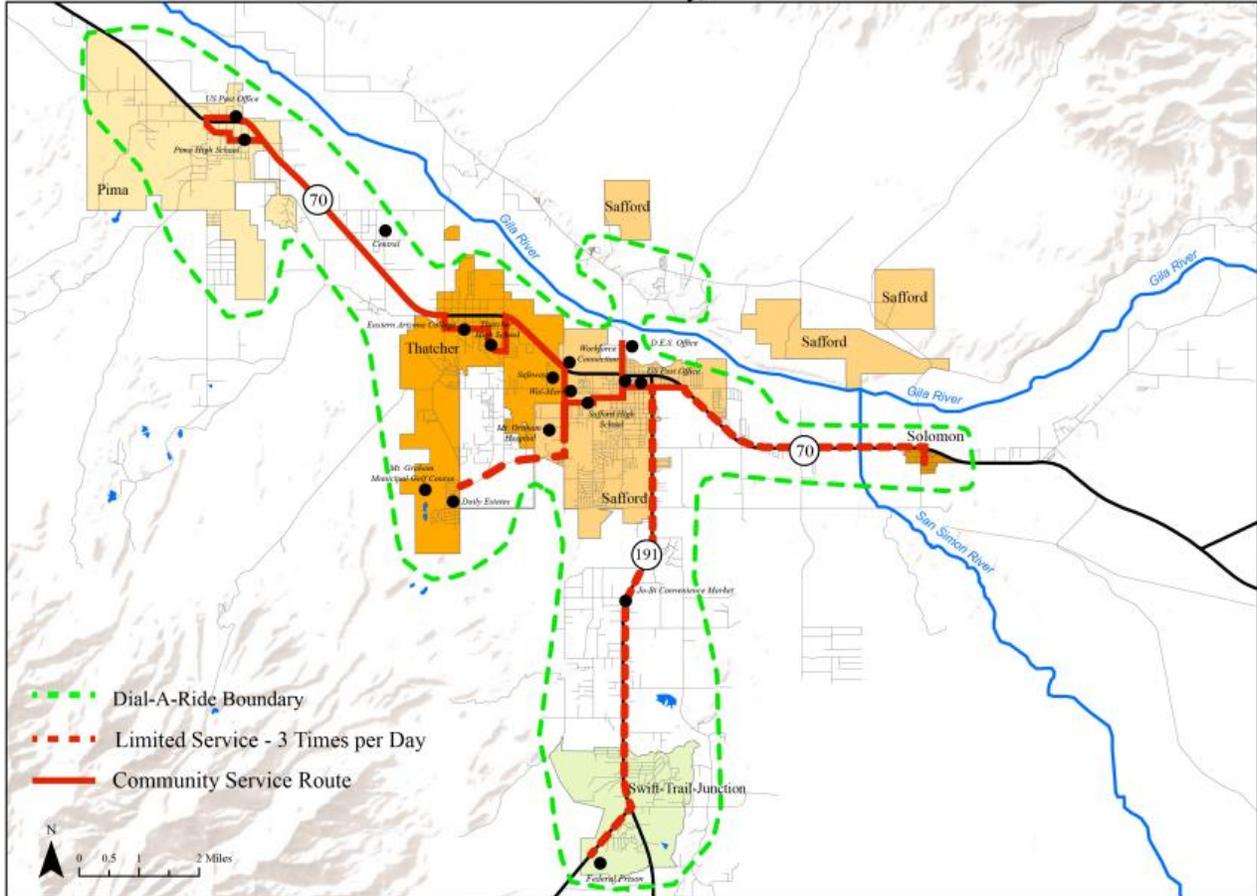
The Phase One Feasibility Study resulted in a recommendation for the following service option:

A fixed bus route will be established and operated with a single bus on weekdays (except holidays), from 7 am to 6 pm. This route includes the following elements:

- Serves the Safford, Pima and Thatcher area throughout the day, with seven to nine round trips.
- Extensions of the route to other areas, including the US Highway 191 corridor from Safford south, Daley Estates, and Solomon will be served with three round trips each day.
- The community service route will combine curbside stops with stops within major activity centers (such as medical center and grocery store) to limit the amount of walking to reach key destinations.

A second bus will be used to provide general public dial-a-ride service within a defined area. The general public dial-a-ride service would operate weekdays from 7 am to 6 pm. If possible, the dial-a-ride service would be coordinated with the current SEACAP dial-a-ride service. These concepts are shown in **Exhibit 5**. Currently a more detailed service plan is being developed for these concepts.

Exhibit 5: Regional Public Transit System



Source: Graham County Transit Feasibility Study, Executive Summary Feasibility Working Paper, 2015

SAFFORD REGIONAL AIRPORT

Safford Regional Airport is a general aviation airport in Graham County, Arizona, located three miles east of Safford and owned by the City of Safford. The Safford Regional Airport Master Plan was updated in 2000. The airport has two runways and a helipad.

Many new projects are planned in the 2016 to 2020 time frame, including projects that are noted in ADOT’s Five Year Construction Program for the Airport summarized in Table 14. Inclusion in the Construction Program does not guarantee that funding will be available for these projects.



Table 14- ADOT’s Five-year Airport Construction Program

Fiscal Year	Project Description
2016	Reconstruct parking apron
2017	Mill and overlay Aviator Lane
2017	Reconstruct Aviator Lane parking lots
2017	Runway pavement preservation
2018	Taxiway pavement preservation
2018	Prepare detailed drainage study for the airfield
2019	Phase 1 construction of a portion of a new apron
2019	Taxiway pavement preservation
2019	Construct new asphalt parking apron
2019	Construct Airside Service Road and parking in front of wash rack and along southern edge of the tower apron
2020	Taxiway pavement preservation
2020	Phase 2 construction of a new east apron

Source: ADOT’s Five Year Construction Program for the 2016-2020, Safford Regional Airport.



Airport Overview and History

The FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems for 2009–2013 categorizes the Safford Regional Airport as a general aviation facility. It is the only paved airport in Graham County.

The Civilian Pilot Training Airport or Wickersham Airport was 3 miles (4.8 km) south of Safford, where the fairgrounds are today. Safford Regional Airport was built as a military auxiliary field during World War II. On November 11, 1941, a 20-year lease for the airport site was given to the City of Safford by the U.S. Government. By March 8, 1946 the airport site was transferred to the City of Safford permanently.

In the 1950s Frontier DC-3s stopped at Safford; they left in 1964.

The airport covers 630 acres at an elevation of 3,179 feet. It has two asphalt runways: 12/30 is 6,006 by 100 feet and 8/26 is 4,800 by 75 feet. It has one concrete helipad, H1, 72 by 72 feet.

In the year ending March 31, 2009 the airport had 8,690 aircraft operations, average 23 per day: 93% general aviation, 7% military and less than 1% air taxi. A total of 32 aircraft were then based at this airport: 56% single-engine, 41% multi-engine and 3% helicopter.

Total operations (take-offs and landings) for this airport were 13,750 for the 12 months ending on April 15, 2015. A total of 43 aircraft were based at this airport at the end of April of 2015.

The Safford Regional Airport Master Plan 2000 is 15 years old. It needs to be updated to reflect current opportunities and challenges and invigorate the City's economic development strategies.

Due to its remoteness, lack of development encroachment, military history as an auxiliary field, and excellent year-round clear climate for pilot training, the Safford Regional Airport offers opportunities aerospace and defense uses associated high-wage industries. The airport master plan update process will offer an opportunity to look at airport needs, land use, transportation and logistics, copper mining, and economic development in an integrated manner.

It is necessary to provide appropriate transportation facilities to support future development at the Airport. It is also key to include goals, policies, and implementation strategies in the Safford General Plan Policy Volume related to future development in and around the Safford Regional Airport to prevent airport encroachment and support airport functions.

RAILROAD ACCESS

The Arizona Eastern Railway (AZER) is a Class III railroad that operates a 265 miles (426 km) mainline between Clifton, Arizona and Miami, Arizona, in the United States. This includes trackage rights over the Union Pacific Railroad between Lordsburg, New Mexico and Bowie, Arizona.

The railroad serves the copper mining region of southeastern Arizona, and the agricultural Gila River Valley. Primary commodities are sulfuric acid, copper concentrate, copper anode and cathode, and copper rod and other copper processing materials. AZER also handles minerals, chemicals, building supplies and lumber. The railroad offers a transload location for lumber, building materials and other consumer commodities at Globe.



Arizona Eastern Railway, Downtown Safford, Arizona.

Overview and History

What is now the Arizona Eastern Railway was chartered as the Gila Valley, Globe and Northern Railway (GVGN) in 1885. In 1899, the railroad came under the control of the Arizona Eastern Railroad (AE). Arizona Eastern was leased by the Southern Pacific Railroad (SP) in 1905 and merged into the SP system in 1924.



Arizona Eastern Railway, Safford, Arizona.

SP sold the Bowie-Miami line to Kyle Railroad in 1988. Kyle was purchased by States Rail in 1995, which was eventually purchased by RailAmerica in 2001. RailAmerica sold the railroad to Permian Basin Railways on December 9, 2004.

In 2006, Arizona Eastern announced the construction of a new 10-mile (16 km) spur from Safford to the new Safford Mine of Freeport-McMoRan Corporation, north of Safford. The mine opened in 2008. Shuttle trains of copper ore has been transported by the railroad to the smelter at Miami-Claypool.

In 2008, AZER purchased the Clifton Subdivision from Union Pacific (UP). The Clifton subdivision serves the Morenci Mine near Clifton, Arizona and interchanges with UP at Lordsburg, New Mexico.

In December 2008, weekend excursion service under the name Copper Spike began operating from Globe to the Apache Gold Hotel Casino near San Carlos. Trains operate four daily round-trips through the winter and spring, on Thursdays through Sundays.



On August 2011, Genesee & Wyoming Inc. announced that it planned to purchase the Arizona Eastern from Iowa Pacific for US\$90.1 million, with the deal expected to be completed by the end of the year. The deal was closed on September 2011.

The Copper Spike excursion train did not resume operations due to the transfer in ownership.

Intermodal Shipment

Currently, there is a freight dock in Safford, Arizona. This along with land availability for industry development along both sides of US Highway 70 in Safford, provides an opportunity for intermodal shipment and the development of an intermodal inland port.

An inland port is a facility that allows standardized shipping containers to be unloaded directly from ships in the ports of Long Beach Los Angeles onto rail and transported to Arizona. No longer do international shipments from Asia, for example, have to be unloaded onto trucks at the port for transport over highways. That means lower handling costs for companies, and it also reduces truck traffic and its associated costs.

An 80-car, double-stacked train takes 160 trucks off the highway. It costs about the same to ship a container all the way from China to Arizona by rail as it does to truck a container from Long Beach to Nogales.

Intermodal shipment is a kind of freight shipping that combines different transportation modes including trucks, boats, and trains in a cost effective manner. Freight intermodal shipping is a cost-effective solution for long-distance shipments.

Increasing railroad access along the US Highway 70 corridor segment between US Highway 191 and the proposed extension of Relation Street in Safford may open opportunities for the creation

of an inland port where dock access to rail from the warehouses allows to expedite the loading and unloading of shipments by rail and efficiently allows for distribution to eastern US and Canada via freight.

Intermodal Shipping Services in Safford

Transporting freight over-the-road is not always the most suitable or cost effective choice for businesses. Intermodal shipping services already exist in Safford, Arizona. *Freight Shipping Pros* in Safford, Arizona provides intermodal shipping services.

SUMMARY

In order to provide the all-encompassing integrated strategy needed to strengthen, diversify and invigorate Safford's economic engine and create the jobs, revenues and services envisioned by the community, the City of Safford General Plan Policy Volume must provide clear direction towards:

- Preparing a Transportation Master Plan update that integrates land use, transportation, infrastructure, regional recreation and natural resources, and economic development
- Assessing the extension of US Highway 191 alternate corridor along the Gila River in conjunction with a Gila River Restoration Project
- Assessing opportunities to strengthen the regional economy by supporting Safford Regional Airport
- Preparing an update of Safford Regional Airport Master Plan based on the findings in this chapter
- Strengthening the mining industry in the area
- Exploring opportunities for the creation of an inland port and the expansion of intermodal shipping services

Environmental Infrastructure

The City of Safford is located in the Gila Valley between the Gila River and Mount Graham. There are significant natural and cultural resources both in and surrounding the City. This chapter identifies critical issues based on best available data and the analysis of opportunities and constraints. Environmental conditions include flood control, water resources, riparian vegetation protection, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, dark skies, clean energy alternatives and other topics.



Gila River, Safford, Arizona.

The Gila River is a major asset transecting the City of Safford and a major regional environmental and economic development asset. There are many invasive species that are of concern in the Gila River watershed, including tamarisk, salt cedar, Russian knapweed, sweet resin bush, yellow star thistle, and Malta star thistle.



Gila River, Safford, Arizona.

Although the watershed supports abundant native plant communities, tamarisk, which has now infested the majority of the riparian areas, is of greatest concern. The Gila Watershed Partnership is currently implementing a project designed to control tamarisk on the Upper Gila River. Salt cedar is another invasive species of major concern.

With respect to riparian restoration, many past projects have been implemented to improve the riparian resources and wildlife habitat, including off-riparian livestock watering facilities, livestock fencing, and river crossing improvements; and riparian habitat restoration. The most recent effort is the Scenarios for the Upper Gila River Watershed.

SCENARIOS FOR THE UPPER GILA RIVER WATERSHED

Resolving water issues on a regional scale involves cooperation and collaboration across jurisdictions and organizations. The University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center (WRRRC), the Water Research and Planning Innovations for Dryland Systems

(Water RAPIDS), The Watershed Restoration and Planning Steering Committee and the Gila Watershed Partnership collaborated in the preparation of the *Scenarios for the Upper Gila River Watershed* completed in 2014.

Working together, the partnership and the committee compiled the Atlas of the Upper Gila River Watershed. This document examines the region's natural, water and cultural resources and identifies four scenarios based on a 30-year planning horizon. The overarching themes of the four scenarios include:

- New Mexico's decision to divest water from the Gila and San Francisco Rivers
- The tamarisk beetle
- Local versus federal control of the watershed
- Fluctuation in cotton prices

NATURAL HAZARD VULNERABILITY



Fire

According to *Scenarios for the Upper Gila River Watershed*, Fire has been an integral part of the Watershed for millennia. Its role has been significantly altered by one hundred years of fire suppression efforts by land managers across the Western United States.

Fire, particularly in the upland forested areas, functioned as a mechanism for maintaining ecosystem health in a fire-adapted landscape. The removal of fire for such a long period of time has caused a substantial change in the composition of these forests. The absence of relatively frequent, low-intensity fires has led to the accumulation of a high level of combustible biomass in these areas. As a result, these regions are exposed to an increased risk of catastrophic fires that are very difficult to control and extinguish and that propagate easily. Possible consequences of wild fire include:

- Increase erosion, runoff and surface flows due to loss of vegetation and tree canopy
- Decrease water quality
- Scorched soils may develop hydrophobic (water-repellent) qualities
- Floods

Infrastructure

Scenarios for the Upper Gila River Watershed reports that approximately 70% of the Upper Gila Watershed population lives within five miles of the Upper Gila or the San Francisco rivers. With the exception of Peridot and San Carlos, the largest municipalities are located along these two rivers.

The region's settlement from the mid-1800s onward was concentrated along these corridors in order to take advantage of the water for human consumption, agriculture and mining. Infrastructure similarly is closely associated with the river.

Infrastructure in the region includes irrigation ditches, diversion dams, roads and bridges. Much of the costs associated with maintaining the public infrastructure is carried by local governments, with some assistance from state and federal entities. Recent decrease in funds has transferred the burden of maintaining such infrastructure to local governments.



Major disasters, such as fire and floods, can seriously degrade or destroy costly and needed infrastructure. A compromised river ecosystem increases the potential of infrastructure damage due to fire and flood.

Drought

Fire risk can be exacerbated by other drivers in the watershed. Extended drought results in critical water-stress on plants, with large areas of dead or dying vegetation.

Arizona streams are under drought conditions 60 to 80 percent of the time. Prolonged and severe droughts are capable of significantly altering flow patterns and hydrologic connectivity in dryland streams, with dire consequences for endangered species of fish.

An increased number of “zero-flow” days - or the number of days that any given section of the river will dry up each year - combined with human impacts will put more pressure on fish and wildlife to survive in coming years. Drought also makes native species of vegetation in the Southwest vulnerable to negative impacts, including:

- Increased susceptibility to disease
- Reductions in plant primary production and water use
- Mortality of immature plants and eventually mature plants
- Susceptibility to invasion of non-native species
- Higher demand for water in areas of limited water supply that increase with the severity of drought.

Multi-decade drought conditions can also negatively impact the economic engine of a region resulting from losses in agriculture, ranching, industry, and other economic sectors. In 2014, Tom Vilsack, the secretary of USDA, declared all counties in the State of Arizona as disaster areas due to drought. This disaster

designation makes farmers and ranchers in both primary and contiguous areas eligible to be considered for federal, low-interest emergency loans and other forms of assistance.

Other negative economic consequences of drought include inability to attract large businesses that could stimulate the economy.

Storms

Between 1921 and 2009, a total of 45 tropical cyclones have impacted Arizona – 20 of which occurred between 1989 and 2009. Given recent years weather patterns, a higher frequency of extreme precipitation events are expected during the summer months with more extreme fall precipitation events. Another possible impact of climate trends include more frequent 100-year floods, which have a one percent probability of occurring once every year, sometimes striking in consecutive years.

Fall and winter storms usually affect rivers and larger streams and wet winters can bring large amounts of precipitation. These storms have been known to cause catastrophic floods, which are brought on by several days of intense regional rainfall, sometimes combined with snowmelt.

When high flow is maintained for several days, it can cause major erosion damage as a river can move hundreds of feet laterally, undercutting building and irrigation works and destroying bridge foundations and pipelines. Regional floods generally happen between September and March in drainage basins larger than 200 square miles, such as the Upper Gila Watershed.

Summer storms usually affect smaller washes and are caused by intense surface heating that results in moisture being drawn into Arizona from the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico and can result in flash floods that travel many miles.

WATER SUPPLY AVAILABILITY (GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER)

Surface water supplies in the watershed are heavily dependent on precipitation. The bimodal precipitation regime in this semi-arid region results in the concentration of snowfall and rainfall into winter and summer monsoon periods, with long intermediate periods of dryness.

Surface flows in the Gila River are strongly tied to snow melt in higher elevations, such as in the headwaters in neighboring New Mexico. The prolonged drought conditions, combined with the predictions of climate change, contribute to ever decreasing flows. Warmer temperatures earlier in the year result in more rapid snow melt and decreased flows during the summer months, when downstream irrigators are most in need of water.

Higher temperatures also contribute to an increase in evapotranspiration rates, causing increased loss of soil moisture and greater stress on crops and native vegetation alike. Various aquifers underlie the basin, each with differing water quality attributes. Salts and total dissolved solid concentrations can differ substantially, and affect the intended uses of the groundwater.

The City of Safford currently draws some of its drinking water from an aquifer, and the quality of the water is such that minimal treatment is needed at present. Decreasing groundwater levels have forced several municipal wells to go off-line on a regular basis.



While water is available from a deeper aquifer, the poorer water quality would require higher levels of treatment, at a notably higher cost than under current practices. Further, extended drought conditions results in minimal surface flows in the Gila River itself. As a result, farmers turn to groundwater supplies for crop irrigation. Heavy use of water for such purposes can result in further decreasing groundwater levels, which then can lead to higher costs for well users (e.g., drilling new wells, higher fuel costs) as well as related problems, such as subsidence.

GILA RIVER RESTORATION: A PLAUSIBLE REGIONAL SOLUTION

The Gila River Restoration Project is a long-range alternative that could increase the resiliency of the City of Safford by reducing the regions' vulnerability to wildfires, floods, erosion, and runoff. Restoring the Gila River as an environmental, wildlife corridor and multi-use recreational amenity can also transform the region and ignite its economic development engine. This effort requires a multi-jurisdiction, wide-ranging mitigation strategy to restore the Gila River segment stretching from Safford to Pima that supports a vital economic



development strategy for recreation, geo-tourism and eco-tourism through:

- Removal of Salt Cedar and other highly flammable, fire prone, and high water consuming invasive species
- Reintroduction of native trees
- Habitat restoration for endangered birds and wildlife
- Construction of a levee channelizing the river in conjunction with Highway 191 alignment
- Flood protection, wildfire fire prevention, and water conservation
- Passive recreation along the river
- Regional park including multipurpose facilities, sports complex, ball courts, and horseback riding facilities.
- Community garden (low-water/contained/sustainable food production)

This long-range strategy aims at increasing the resiliency of the City of Safford while reducing the regions' vulnerability to wildfires, floods, erosion, and runoff.

US Highway 191 Extension in Conjunction with Gila River Restoration: Special Considerations

The Transportation and Circulation chapter of this document discusses the need to assess the extension of US Highway 191 (1st Avenue) north of US Highway 70. The concept of extending 1st Ave north and then along the Gila River to act as a levee is an exciting possibility.

During recent work re-mapping about 9 miles of the Gila River Floodplain upstream of the City of Safford in Greenlee County and current work on another 4 miles of mainline Gila River, a significant amount of land has been reclaimed just by restudying the floodplain without improvements.

One possibility that requires further analysis is to reclaim land south of the Gila River from 1st Ave to 20th Ave using a new alignment of US Highway 191 as a structural flood control measure. Studies will be needed to explore this and other alternatives. The following considerations may apply.

An alignment of 1st Ave that extends north to Gila River before turning northwest to follow the Gila River south bank will extend into the Floodway as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Floodway is regulated more strictly than the Floodplain Fringe (the area outside of the Floodway).

Floodways have a no-rise criterion and encroachment with a levee would certainly have impacts; however, the mapping of the Gila River is most likely outdated as is the case in many other communities. The initial step will be a study to properly map the floodway and ensure that the current delineation is correct. If the current delineation is incorrect, the City of Safford will need to conduct the engineering studies necessary to delineate the floodplain. There are provisions for the revision of a floodplain that is obsolete/outdated. Those provisions allow the Floodway to be revised. Additionally if a flood control structure revises the limits of the floodway there is a process by which the public is notified and adjacent communities like Graham County, the Town of Thatcher and the general public can review the proposed revision.

The driving factor for a revision to a Floodway is that property owners on the north side of the river cannot be adversely impacted by the revision without their approval.



The existing Floodway is a boundary generated by an encroachment analysis approved by the local communities and FEMA. If the new alignment avoids the Floodway boundary altogether, reclaiming property to the south is possible.

The Gila River is very dynamic and powerful, and it should be assumed that any levee that functions as the road alignment should be designed with a soil cement base and embankment which has been one of the tried and tested methods of training major watercourses in Arizona. The soil cement embankment will need to extend below to the design scour depth which could be significant.

Likely the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) regulated by the Corps of Engineers under the Section 404 of the Clean Water Act is independent of the floodplain boundary. Based on the current channel and farmland boundary, the road alignment may minimize impacts.

If a threshold is exceeded on the 404 disturbance and the impact requires an Individual Permit, then mitigation is required. This could be on-site or off-site mitigation. Considering the presence of a perennial water source it could be a good candidate for on-site mitigation.

Restoration could be very successful in this segment of the Gila River. Because of the perennial water source many more options of restoration of riparian habitat are available. A study combining River Restoration and US Highway 191 alternative corridor in proximity to the river will assist in assessing the possible alternatives and

provide a cost-benefit analysis. **Exhibit 6** shows hydrology.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

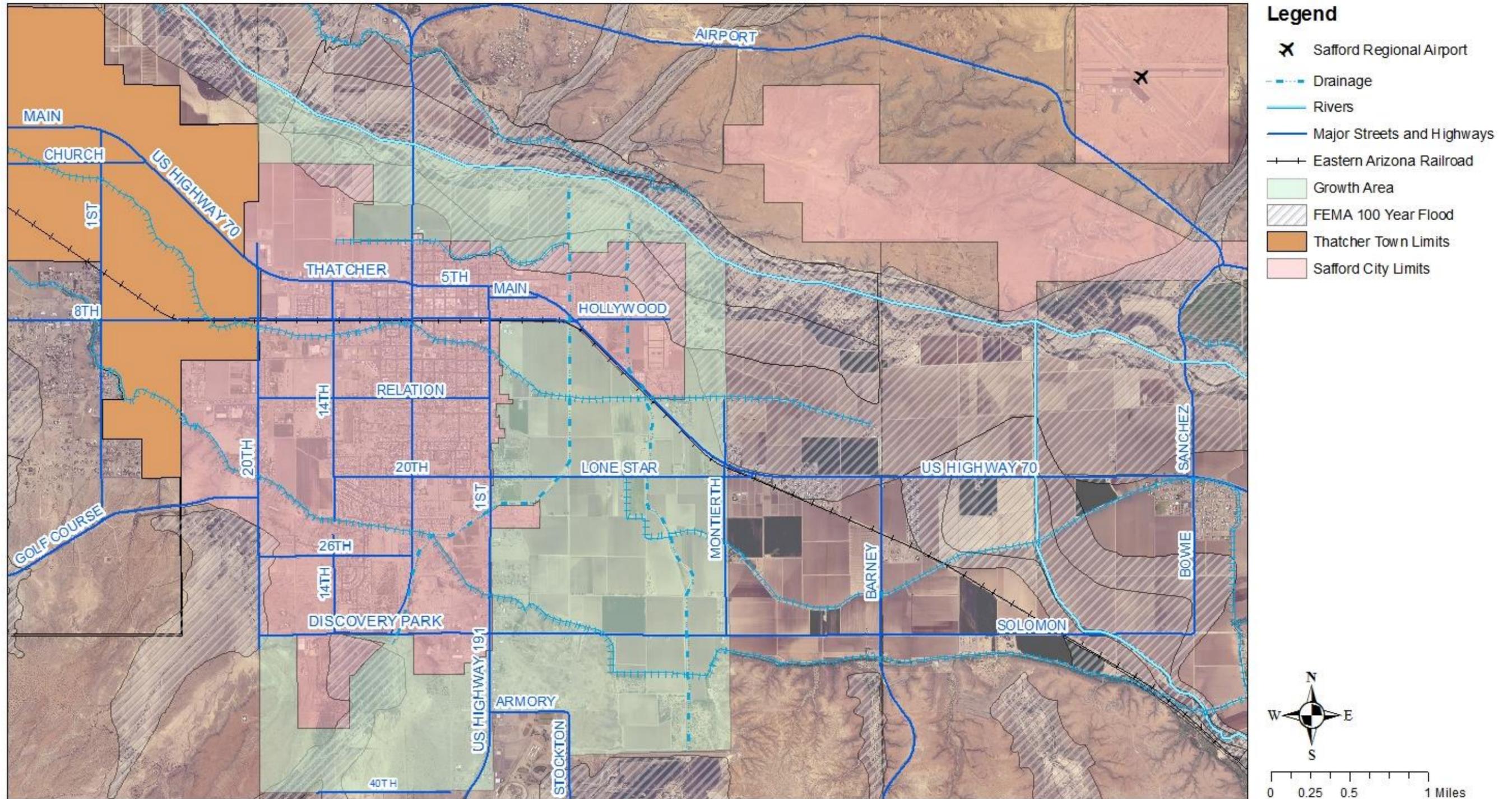
Safford's historic downtown area has a variety of shops and restaurants in a lovely historic setting. Safford has a façade improvement program to work in partnership with property owners to revitalize and beautify downtown Safford. This program also assists in attracting shoppers to downtown Safford and increasing property values. The Façade Grant Program is part of a comprehensive approach to improving downtown Safford. Safford Downtown Association members that are property owners and merchants operating within downtown Safford within the area from Highway 191 to 8th Avenue and Highway 70 and 8th Street are eligible for the grant program.

In 2015, Safford completed the Main Street Improvement Project, which included bump outs and landscaping as well as benches and traffic signal and lighting improvements.

With respect to cultural resources, the upper Gila River Valley in the vicinity of the City of Safford has experienced human habitation for at least 2,500 years.

Safford was founded by Joshua Eaton Bailey, Hiram Kennedy, and Edward Tuttle, who came from Gila Bend, in southwestern Arizona. They left Gila Bend in the winter of 1873-74; they work on canals and dams destroyed by high water the previous summer. Upon arrival, early in 1874, the villagers laid out the town site.

Exhibit 6: Hydrology



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016



The town is named after Arizona Territorial Governor Anson P. K. Safford and includes numerous historic buildings and landmarks.

The Town of Safford was incorporated October 10, 1901, and changed to City of Safford in 1955.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Safford has views of Mount Graham, which is the tallest mountain in southern Arizona, as well as the Gila River Mountains, the mature trees which line the city streets and the night sky.

DARK SKIES

Due to Safford's location, the area has been chosen as a prime spot for hosting observatories. Safford and Thatcher's street lights are low-output to improve the quality of the images taken by the observatories atop the mountain to the southwest of the city. The mountain for which the county is named, Mount Graham, is just a few miles southwest of the city.

The mountain is home to the Mount Graham International Observatory (MGIO), located six miles south of Safford. The Mount Graham International Observatory complex is operated by the University of Arizona.

Safford has a Sign Ordinance and Outdoor Lighting Code. Codifications have been done to this code recently.



Mount Graham Observatory, Safford, Arizona.

AIR QUALITY

The air quality in Safford is generally excellent and supports good health. Safford is in attainment for all criteria pollutants. The criteria pollutants are carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide. Criteria pollutants are the only air pollutants with national air quality standards that define allowable concentrations of these substances in ambient air.

When a region is “in attainment” it means that concentrations of pollutants are below the levels established by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Water Quality and Water Resources

Water resources play a critical role to the City of Safford. The City provides potable water not only to City residents, but also to the surrounding communities of San Jose, Solomon, Thatcher, Central, Thunderbird Valley, Cactus, and Airport North.



PROJECT 20/20 VISION: WATER SYSTEM PLANNING

The Project 20/20 Vision was originally commissioned in 2000 by the City of Safford in an effort to continuously monitor, evaluate and improve the City's potable water system. It was updated in 2007 and 2013. Prepared by Trueline Engineering, the 2013 document reflects system upgrades and use data through 2012, expands the discussion of conservation, includes the results of distribution system modeling, and extends the design projects and improvement planning to the years 2022, 2037 and 2062. The evaluation of the water system focuses on three components: source, storage, and distribution.

The City of Safford water system serves an area of over 100 square miles through approximately 250 miles of pipelines. An average flow over the past five years of 2,325 gallons per minute (gpm) serves a 20,500 service area population based on an estimate of 3 people per residential connection.

The current total useable production capacity is 3,600 gpm. The City of Safford should acquire at least 2,200 gpm in additional sources immediately and work toward a goal of 4,220 gpm by 2022. The City's water sources are groundwater wells located along a river valley and from an infiltration gallery in the bed of Bonita Creek.

Almost twenty million gallons of storage is available in seven tanks in excellent condition. The City should continue its plan to add an additional 1 MG tank. The distribution system is and will remain in constant need of expansion, repair and update as the community grows.

Several areas have less than desirable fire flows due to a lack of conveyance capacity, lack of redundant pipelines, and undersized pipes. The area's per capita water consumption is relatively

high; reduction of potable water use through education, conservation measures, rate structure adjustment, and the increased reuse of reclaimed wastewater should be top priorities.

2014 ANNUAL DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

The *Annual Drinking Water Quality Report* provides a one-time evaluation of source water for the City of Safford. All regulated water systems are required to test their water regularly and to ensure the quality of water meets the requirements of State and Federal water quality standards for over 90 contaminants.

Based on the information currently available on the hydrogeologic settings and the adjacent land uses that are in the specified proximity of the drinking water sources of this public water system, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) gave a high risk designation for the degree to which this public water system drinking water sources are protected in the 2014 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. A designation of high risk indicates there may be additional source water protection measures which can be implemented on the local level. This does not imply that the source water is contaminated nor does it mean that contamination is imminent. Rather, it simply states that land use activities or hydrogeologic conditions exist that make the source water susceptible to possible future contamination.

Specific water quality data has not been included in this report, however that information can be obtained from the Consumer Confidence Report that is compiled and distributed by the City of Safford. A summary of this Source Water Assessment Program Report will also be included in the Consumer Confidence Report.



Water Conservation and Water Restrictions

Water Conservation is an important issue to everyone in the Gila Valley. Many customers of the Safford Water Department have already discovered that using water wisely is easy and simple.

Wise water use stretches water resources, which is especially critical during times of drought and also during the summer months when the region experiences high temperatures. On hot summer days, water use greatly exceeds that of the average winter day.

The City of Safford is currently in STAGE 3 WATER RESTRICTIONS. As per the 2014 Water Quality Report, the following water restrictions schedule applies:

- Outside watering shall be prohibited between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Watering is limited to two (2) hours on designated allowed watering days.
- If your address ends with an even number, water on Wednesday and Saturday
- If your address ends with an odd number, water on Tuesday and Friday.
- No person shall:
 - ~ Install swimming pools, spas, wading pools or ornamental fountains exceeding 5,500 gallons.
 - ~ Fill or refill swimming pools, spas, wading pools, or ornamental fountains.
 - ~ Plant or install new sod or turf.
 - ~ Wash vehicles on the allowed days unless a bucket and hose with a positive cutoff nozzle is used. No restrictions apply to vehicles that must be washed for public health, safety or welfare purposes, or to commercial car washes.
 - ~ Hose off of pavement, sidewalks, walkways, parking lots, tennis courts, basketball courts, buildings or any structures, except for health or safety reasons.

- ~ Use water from a fire hydrant except for emergencies or upon the written approval of the Utilities Director and Fire Chief; and except for such use associated with firefighting activities, public health, safety or welfare.

WATER RESOURCES STATEMENT

The Water Resources Statement provides an overview of the known water sources that are both physically and legally available to the City. Although the City currently only utilizes groundwater sources, this statement will include surface water rights that present a more complete picture of available resources to meet current and projected demands.

Existing Water Supply currently consists of 12 active groundwater sources, eight booster pumps, seven storage tanks, and seven chlorine treatment plants. With all sources combined, the total delivery capacity is 9,300 gallons per minute (gpm). Two additional wells (Swift Trail U of A wells) are projected to add 480 gpm of capacity to the system.

The largest single source is the Bonita Creek system, delivering 2,100 gpm via gravity flow through 12" and 10" pipelines. Delivery from the Bonita Creek system is limited by the pipeline system and is under the volume allocated to the City by the agreements in place. Four wells are used in a limited capacity as supplementary sources and are not included in the delivery capacity total shown.

The comparison of Projected Future Demands to Existing Water Supply provides a key measure of the adequacy of the current system to meet projected needs. Previous planning efforts had projected the sustainable yield, or the capacity with the largest single source out of service, of



City of Safford General Plan

the system to begin to be below the maximum day demand (MDD), calculated as 175% of the average daily demand (ADD), beginning in 2007.

For this element, average daily demand for the last several years will be used along with growth projections to assess how the current sustainable yield compares with the current and projected demands through the planning period.

The Emergency Water Management Plan identifies and explains measures to protect water supplies during short- and long-term emergency situations. It defines critical levels of demands related to production capacity, equipment failures, and possible water contamination as well as outlining system responses. The plan will be updated per 2013 ordinances defining drought response.

The Gila River Water Agreement is a crucial water rights agreement between Gila River Indian Community, the San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District, the City of Safford, and the federal government. The agreement secures 9,740 acre feet from within the Gila River impact area to the City annually. It also allows the City to supplement its allocation on a gallon-for-gallon basis for effluent from its Water Reclamation Plant that is returned to the Gila River.

Surface water rights held by the City to runoff from several surrounding areas and new sources developed outside the Gila River impact area are exempt from the agreement. Identification of Critical Issues is provided to help direct objectives of system managers moving forward.

The General Plan Policy Volume includes goals, policies and implementation measures that complying with all applicable State of Arizona Revised Statutes' requirements and address the following:

- Resolve remaining legal issues related to Gila River water rights, and obtaining

additional high quality water sources outside the designated Gila River withdrawal area

- Incorporate additional storage facility at proper locations
- Reduce MDD and the growth rate of future demand through water conservation measures
- Continue to develop new technologies or implement existing technologies for recycling and reusing water.
- The need to maintain the current high level of water quality.

The City of Safford will continue to explore new options to protect water quality and adequacy.

Energy

In 2012, the Cooperative Extension's Land Use Planning and Sustainable Development Program conducted an analysis for solar energy development potential on the 6200 square miles within Cochise County. Any county surpassing 125,000 in population per the 2010 Census is required by ARS §11-804.B.4 to amend their comprehensive plan to include an Energy Element.

The analysis was expanded to include other counties around the state, regardless of their population size. The resulting analysis assists counties, cities and towns in developing land use policies for siting renewable energy facilities.

Prepared by University of Arizona Cooperative Extension and the University of Arizona College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture, in March 2013, the *Renewable Energy Opportunity Analysis Summary Report* includes solar facility siting analysis for East Central Arizona (Graham and Greenlee Counties).

The analysis, using the Renewable Energy Opportunity Analysis (REOA) model, was conducted to identify areas of low, moderate and high potential for small and large solar projects on a regional basis. The resulting outputs help renewable energy developers and decision makers begin the more complex task of focusing on specific areas with sites that show the highest potential within their region.

The *Renewable Energy Opportunity Analysis Summary Report* explains the methodology behind the analysis, summarize the results, and provide direction for the use of the outputs.

This analysis is only the first step in determining the on-the-ground feasibility of constructing any utility-scale facility. Further site planning and engineering will be required. With the results of this REOA, potential solar developers may save considerable amounts of time and money by focusing on those geographic areas with moderate to high potential. Any further analysis must consider other City of Safford strategies, policies and regulations, such as economic impact, ACC permitting requirements, access, impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods, water use, and scale and type of solar development.

SOLAR ENERGY: AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Case Study: New Mexico

Solar energy generation can be an economic development tool. The Public Service Company of New Mexico is actively siting 5 MW projects around their state to meet their statewide renewable energy goal. Using the standard of 10 acres required for one megawatt of generated power, a typical 5 MW solar PV project requires

about 50 acres of land. A project of this size has the potential to power approximately 3,000 to 4,000 homes and generate 60 to 75 construction jobs over a period of two to three months.



Congera Solar Field at the UA Tech Park, Tucson, Arizona.

Case Study: The Solar Zone, Tucson, Arizona

In 2010, a 200-acre site within the University of Arizona Science and Technology Park (Tech Park) was designated Solar Zone. The Solar Zone may position Tucson, Arizona, as the leading solar energy producer in the world. The project includes five major components:

- Using solar energy to generate electricity with photovoltaic panels or with parabolic reflectors that concentrate the sun's energy on pipes to produce steam to spin turbines that turn generators.
- Research and development to improve efficiency of solar power generation to reduce costs, improve storage process, and provide power at night or on cloudy days.
- Manufacture and distribution of solar energy hardware.
- Workforce education for all phases of solar equipment, from manufacturing to installation.
- Education and awareness, an initiative to help local community understand how the public can employ solar energy for everyday use.

The Solar Zone is currently buildout and contributes significant value to the Tucson/Pima County region. Ten companies and organizations test and demonstrate a variety of solar technologies and systems. The site generates 23 megawatts of power which is nearly twice the daily electrical consumption of the Tech Park. At the Solar Zone, researchers and companies work together to evaluate how these technologies perform side-by-side under identical operating conditions.

Today, the Solar Zone is one of the largest multi-technology solar evaluation sites in the United States. The first-of-its-kind solar-centric research park integrates:

- Power generation by multiple technologies
- Research and development
- Materials and supplies
- Manufacturing and distribution of solar equipment and hardware
- Green job and workforce training
- Educational outreach
- Public demonstration and awareness hub

Phase one of the Solar Zone is a partnership between the University of Arizona and Tucson Electric Power. Its focus is on installing multiple solar technologies so that when the power is generated, these technologies can be tested and evaluated side-by-side under identical operating conditions. University of Arizona researchers are testing everything from solar power forecasting to the environmental impact of solar energy installations.

Phase Two focuses on additional research and the development of new applications to meet the increasing demand for new products, applications, and systems.

Applications include military, commercial and household use, consumer electronics, and transportation. Technological advances such as nanotechnology will drive this research and development by reducing size and weight and increasing efficiency. Capital investment exceeds \$120 million.

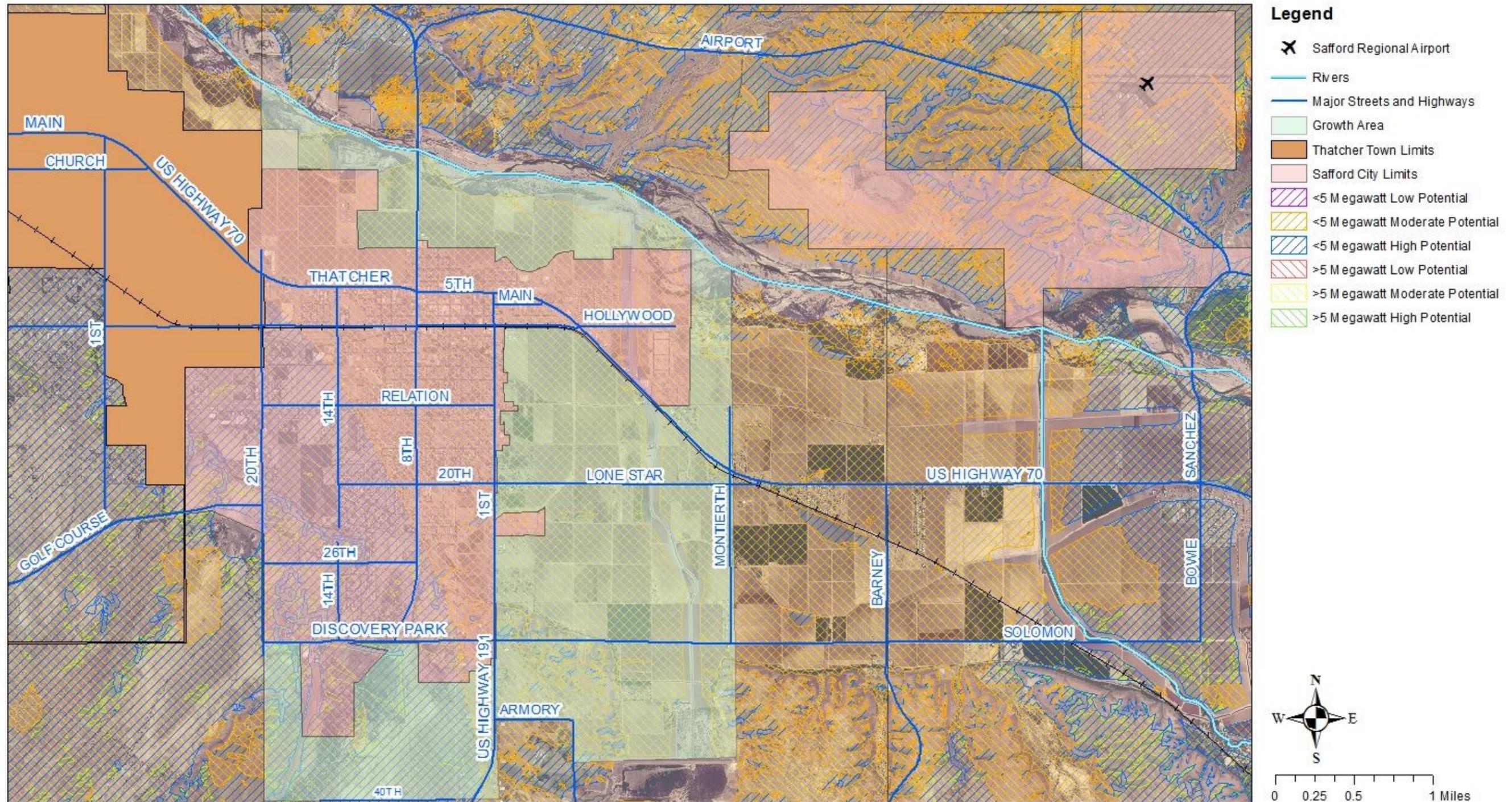


TEP Solar Field at the UA Tech Park, Tucson, Arizona.

Although the City of Safford is not required by statutes to include an Energy Element in its General Plan, solar energy generation and deployment could be utilized as an economic development tool to help diversify the economic portfolio of the City. The Policy Volume of this General Plan, includes goals, policies and implementation strategies that support solar energy.

Exhibit 7 shows solar generation potential within the Safford Planning Area.

Exhibit 7: Areas of Low, Moderate, and High Megawatt Solar Energy Production Potential



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016

Public Services and Facilities

This chapter addresses the efficient provision of existing and future public services needed to support the current and forecasted populations. While none of these services are required by state law, they all play a significant part in how the City of Safford functions. This chapter focuses on services operated by the City. These services include:

- Public Safety and Emergency Services
- Water System
- Wastewater System
- Landfill
- Library Services
- Workforce Training/Education
- Communications

Exhibit 8 shows City of Safford public services geographical service areas.

SAFFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Safford Police Department's mission is to serve the public by furthering a partnership with the community to protect life and property, prevent crimes, and solve problems. Safford Police Department is dedicated to improving the quality of life by earning the mutual trust and respect of the community through professionalism and commitment to excellence.

The vision of the department is to become a leader among agencies providing police services by placing a high priority on community involvement, education, customer service and respect for individual rights. The Safford Police Department is located at 525 S. 10th Avenue.



Citizen's Academy Program

The Safford Police Department hosts a Citizen Police Academy during the fall. The goal of the Citizen's Academy is to foster a greater understanding of Law Enforcement's role in the community and strengthen the Police Department relationship with local business owners and citizens. Topics addressed include, but not limited to, Introduction to Law Enforcement, Body Worn Cameras, Narcotics and Drug Interdiction, Firearm Safety, Live-Fire Shoot, Firearms Training Simulator, Traffic and DUI Investigations, Criminal Investigations, Taser and Use of Force.

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter, participants complete a background check. This program is offered at no cost.

Whether as part of a multi-purpose civic complex or as a free standing facility, the Safford Police Department is in need of a facility that can properly house the Police Department's services. The current facility is overcrowded and outdated.

Neighborhood Watch Program

A Neighborhood Watch Program is a cohesive body of concerned citizens coming together to



City of Safford General Plan

address common issues that affect their neighborhood. The Neighborhood Watch program is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Safford’s neighborhoods. The foundation of the program is built upon citizens and police working in partnership.

A comprehensive Neighborhood Watch Program offers numerous benefits. Such programs instill a greater sense of security, wellbeing, and reduce the fear of crime in neighborhoods. Neighborhood Watch helps instill a greater "sense of community," by putting the neighbor back into neighborhood. Participating in Safford’s Neighborhood Watch Program include the following benefits:

- Reducing the risk of being a crime victim
- Being better prepared to respond to suspicious activity
- Increased information on issues that impact your neighborhood
- Obtaining Neighborhood Watch signs
- Getting to know your neighbors
- Reducing the fear of crime and making your neighborhood more livable

Police Department Expansion Needs

A guided tour of the Safford Police Department building, members of the Safford General Plan Update Guidance Team, and community input gathered during the Safford General Plan Design Charrette pointed at the need to expand the existing Safford Police Department building. The Police force currently operates in a crowded facility.

During the Safford General Plan Design Charrette, the design team translated into a concept the community idea of combining a new Police Department with other governmental functions in a multi-purpose government services facility. While retaining private entrance for each facility in accord with each facility’s programmatic needs, the multi-purpose government center could include court house

space, police, library and other government functions and/or services as deemed appropriate by a facilities cost-benefit analysis. If located in Downtown Safford, somewhere along main street, such multi-purpose government or civic center could help revitalize downtown.



Multi-purpose Government Center Concept, Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center.

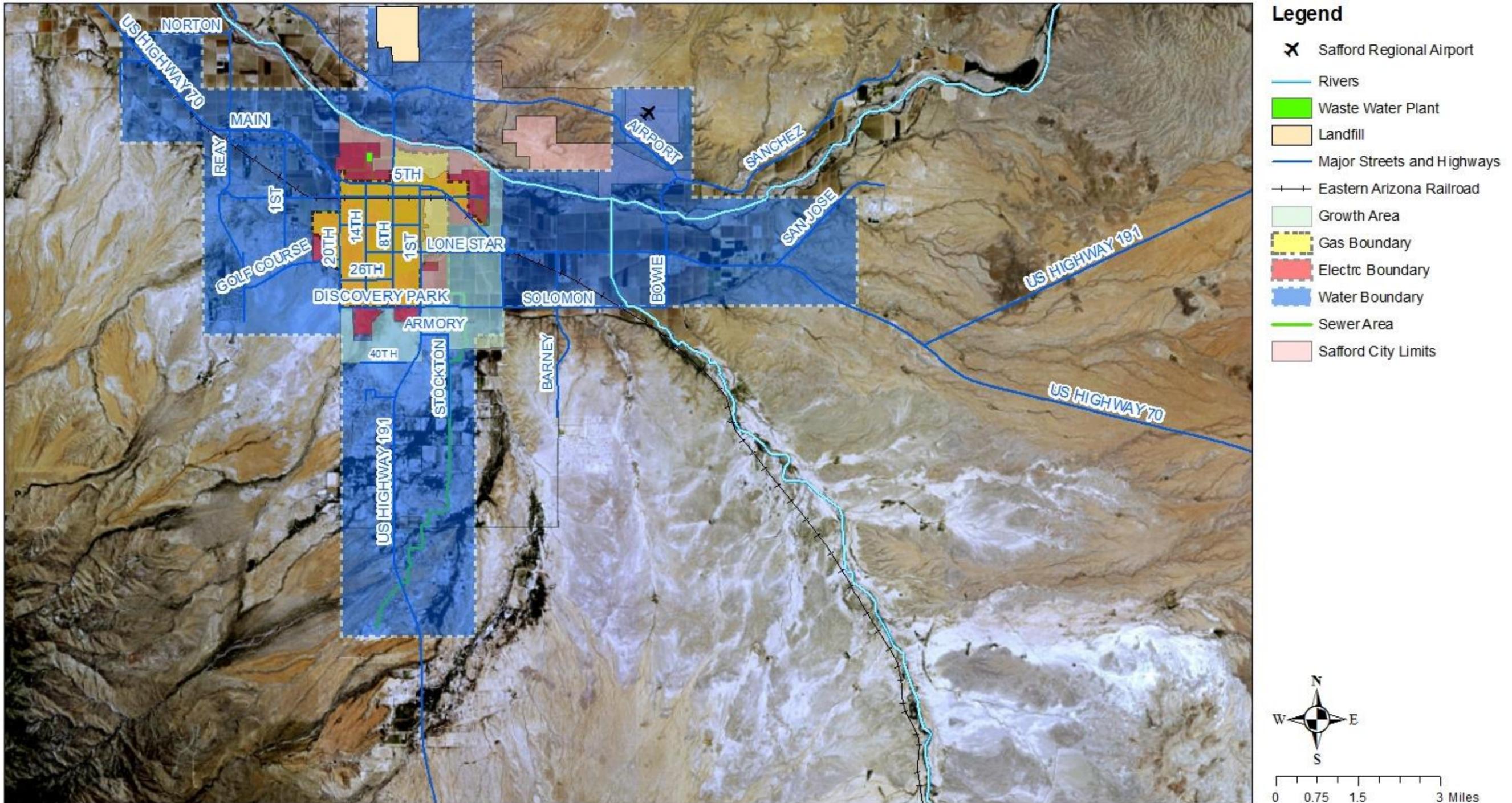
SAFFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Located at 620 South 7th Avenue Safford, Arizona, the Safford Fire Department currently has 30 members. The fire district service area encompasses 111.7 square miles and includes approximately 27,000 people. The Safford Fire District with a city ISO rating of class 4, has six (6) fire engines and one (1) 3000 Tanker. The Safford Fire Department responds to 200 fire calls annually. **Exhibit 9** shows Safford Rural Fire Districts’ geographic service area.



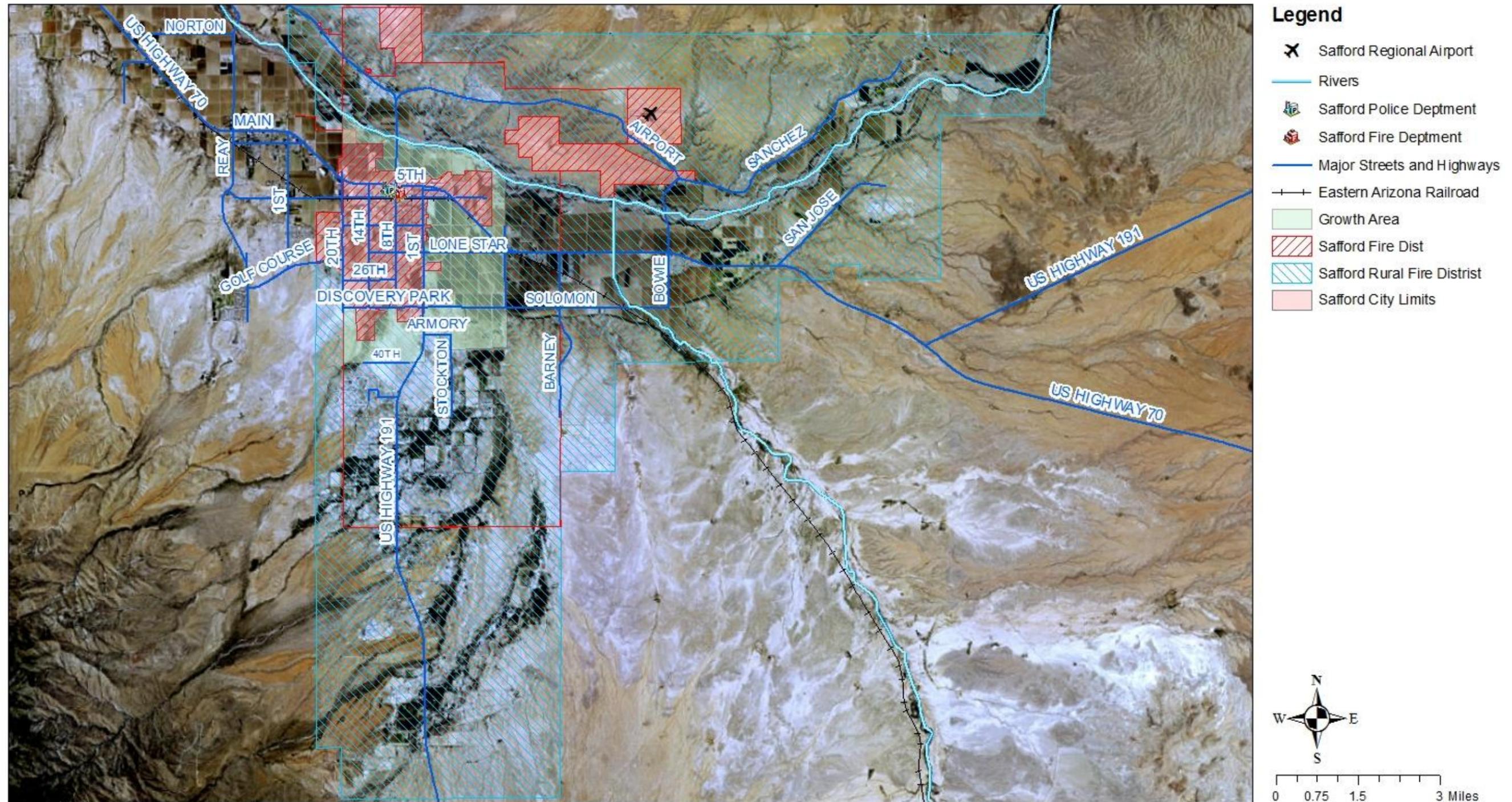
City of Safford Fire Department, Safford, Arizona.

Exhibit 8: Safford Public Services Geographic Service Areas



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016

Exhibit 9: Safford Fire Districts Geographic Service Area



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016



Water and Waste Water Programs

The City of Safford Water Department is responsible for Safford's water and wastewater programs. The water program provides a safe and adequate domestic water supply to all residents in the water service area. The wastewater program assists in providing a clean, healthy environment through the effective collection of wastewater.

The Water and Sewer Crew consists of fourteen employees that are responsible for the maintenance, repair and construction of the system. The water system includes 255 miles of water main and 972 fire hydrants. The wastewater system includes 75 miles of sewer main and 1,085 manholes.

WATER PROGRAM

The City of Safford provides water to Safford, San Jose, Solomon, Thatcher, Central, Thunderbird Valley and Cactus south of Safford and Hillcrest and the Airport North of the Gila River.

The City's first priority is to supply safe drinking water to the public and follow all Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) drinking water standards. The Water Quality Team consists of one (1) Water Operator and one (1) Water Quality Specialist. The team performs weekly microbiological tests and monthly, quarterly and annual compliance sampling and reporting.

The second priority is to supply enough water for fire protection and adequate water pressure through the operation and maintenance procedures that apply to the Bonita Creek Water System, eight (8) booster pumps, eleven (11) wells, seven (7) chlorine treatment plants and seven (7) water storage tanks.

Active Wells in Safford include:

- Bonita Springs/Bonita Artesian Wells
- Well #15
- Kempton Wells A, B and C
- Morris Wells 1, 2 and 3
- Carrasco Well
- Alder Well
- Smith Well
- Clonts Well

HISTORIC WATER CONSUMPTION

As part of the *City of Safford 20/20 Vision 2013 Water System* study, meter reading records were tabulated and usage averaged since 1975 and plotted for each year through the year 2012 in order to create a visual representation of the community's historic consumption. In 1990, the utility began keeping separate records for residential and commercial use. The plot shows an increase from 750 million gallons to about 1.25 billion gallons of use per year over the 37-year period. The most recent records (5 year average previous to 2013) indicate that approximately 68 percent of the total use is residential, 28 percent is commercial, and 3 percent is used on the Graham County Fairgrounds, and the remainder is industrial.



Water System Overall Annual Growth Rate

The overall annual growth rate of the system over the past 37-year period based on the number of commercial and residential services (meters) was about 1.9 percent. The five year period from 1975 to 1980 showed the highest average rate of growth at about 3.3 percent per annum, and the next 5-year period showed the lowest average rate of about 1.1 percent per annum.

Per Capita Water Consumption

The per capita consumption of water in Safford has averaged 172 gallons per day for each person over the past 37 years (assuming that there are 3 people per service connection and all uses are included) with annual averages ranging from 153 to 196 gallons per capita per day (gpcd). The 1995 data published on consumption in Tucson area shows a weighted area use of 113 gallons per person per day, with system averages ranging from 105 and 148.

Rainfall and Water Use

When correlated, the plots for annual rainfall and per capita consumption from 1975 and 2012 indicate high water use with lower rain fall and decreased water use with higher rain fall. This correlation suggest that a substantial portion of Safford’s water consumption is irrigation.

Projected Water Consumption

Using the growth rate of 3 percent per annum, and assuming that the consumption trend of 164 gpcd continues, the total water usage in billions of gallons is projected in Table 15.

Table 15 - Projected Water Consumption 2022-2062

Average 2008-2012	2022	2037	2062
1.223	1.644	2.561	5.362
(2,327 gpm)	(3,128 gpm)	(4,873 gpm)	(10,202 gpm)

Source: City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan Water System Planning Document, 2013.

Existing Water Sources

The City of Safford water system currently has twelve useable (potable quality and reliably accessible) sources of water with a total delivery capacity of 5,250 gallons per minute (gpm), which equates to 8,469 Acre-feet per year (AFY). The largest source is the Bonita Creek system which currently delivers about 1,650 GPM of high quality water via gravity flow. A prudent planning guideline for community water systems is to assume that the largest source of water is out of service. The total useable production capacity is 5,250-1,650 = 3,600 gpm or 5,807 afy.

Source of Supply Requirements

As provided in the City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan, at a minimum, the source of supply should be capable of meeting the maximum day system demand with at least one of its largest well out of service. The maximum day system demand (MDD) is considered to be 150 percent to 350 percent of the average daily demand (ADD). The MDD was calculated using a factor of 2.5 times the ADD. See Table 16.



Table 16 - Projected Water Consumption 2022-2062

Categories	2008-12	2022	2037	2062
Population	20,503	27,554	42,929	89,883
ADD (gpm)	2,327	3,128	4,873	10,202
MDD (gpm)	5,818	7,820	12,183	25,505
ADDT'L Source Required (gpm)	2,218	2,002	4,363	13,322

Source: City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan Water System Planning Document, 2013.

Water Rights

Under the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Settlement of 2004, the initial water budget from the Mt. Graham System, Bonita Creek, and wells from inside the Impact Zone (near the Gila River) is cumulatively 9740 afy, which equates to about 6038 gpm. Further, but not in addition to, Safford can continue to claim 5310 afy (3292 gpm) from Bonita Creek. All of the twelve useable sources we now have (5250 gpm) are sources limited by the settlement. The City’s right to purchase water rights outside the Impact Zone is not limited.

From the allowable 6038 gpm from the settlement, 400 gpm from the Mt. Graham system is used to supplement irrigation demands at the golf course. Therefore, The City can legally draw an additional 388 gpm from the Impact Zone.

It would be prudent to plan for more-than-full utilization of the City’s GRIC settlement water rights from multiple wells near the Gila River to safe guard against the complete loss of flows from Bonita Creek, and to be able to fully utilize and protect the City’s legal water rights.

Water Sources - Inside the Impact Zone

BONITA CREEK

Even though the infiltration gallery in the Bonita Creek Canyon is designed to intake 4000 gpm, the pipeline which carries the water from Bonita Creek into the system restricts the flow to 2100 gpm, and under the current draught condition, the delivery has been further reduced to 1650 gpm. An additional 1642 gpm (3292 gpm - 1650 gpm) is legally available from Bonita Creek. Current Bonita Creek withdraw, however, is offset by the withdraw from other sources from within the Impact Zone.

Under normal (non-draught) conditions, Safford could increase the flow from the Bonita gallery. Since the pipeline system flows by gravity from the infiltration gallery, and the pipes themselves are aged and subject to rupture, raising the head via booster pumping in order to increase the delivery is probably not feasible. The logical method by which to increase the gallery flows to fully utilize Safford’s water rights would be to upsize the pipeline system.



Under draught conditions, it may be feasible to drill additional wells or increase the use of existing wells within Bonita Creek to fully utilize our existing water rights. Because there is no electrical power in Bonita Creek, the use of solar power generation should be explored.

WELLS NEAR THE GILA RIVER

Assuming that the Bonita Creek system is never fully developed, and could be completely non-functional due to continued draught, flooding, or other damage, it would be prudent to develop at least the full 6038 gpm of Impact Zone rights from wells near the Gila River, or 2438 gpm (6038 gpm- 3600 gpm) in addition to the existing well pumping capacity. This assumption further justifies the restoration of the Gila River mentioned in the Environmental Infrastructure chapter of this document.

Water Sources - Outside the Impact Zone

Development of water outside the GRIC Settlement "Bright Line" limits must account for the remainder of our needed sources.

Table 17 – Water Sources Development Goal

Source Location	2022
Inside the Impact Zone (GRIC Settlement)	Bonita Creek 1,642 gpm
	+ Other <u>2,348 gpm</u>
	Total 3,990 gpm
Outside the Impact Zone	Remainder of Needed Sources

Source: City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan Water System Planning Document, 2013.

Table 18 – Source Development Plan – Planning Milestone

Source	2022	2037	2062	Total
Bonita Creek	1,642	0	0	1,642
Near Gila River	2,438	0	0	2,438
Outside the Impact Zone	140	4,363	13,322	17,825
Total	4,220	4,363	13,322	21,905

Source: City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan Water System Planning Document, 2013.

Conservation and Reuse

Because naturally occurring water of drinking quality is a finite resource, and the City’s legal right to water is limited, the community cannot sustain unlimited growth with the current consumption trends. As the per person consumption shows, the community uses substantially more water than Tucson area customers.

In comparison to national consumption trends, Safford’s 2008 - 2012 per person total average daily usage of 164 gallons was equaled or exceeded only by the states of Utah, Nevada and Idaho at 218, 213 and 186 gallons per person per day respectively. Arizona's usage in 1990 was estimated at 150 gallons per person per day.

It is imperative that we conserve drinking water in order to decrease current and future consumption trends, and to reduce the need for additional sources of water needed to sustain growth and provide the services the community envisions.



The use of reclaimed water is also an important tool in reducing the amount of additional fresh water needed by use as a credit against the City's legal right to certain waters, and to replace fresh water used for irrigation.

An attainable goal of use reduction through conservation and use of reclaimed water can dramatically reduce the amount of additional sources we will need to provide in the future.

As an example of the potential benefit of a successful program of water conservation, consider the effect of reducing our consumption trend from our current usage of about 164 gpcd to the 1990 Arizona State average of 150 gpcd. If we prepared ourselves with enough source capacity to meet the 2062 projected demands, and successfully reduced our consumption by about 8.5 percent to equal 150 gpcd, that amount of source would sustain the same aggressive rate of growth for an additional 5 years beyond our 50-year planning period. A reduction by about 26.8 percent to 120 gpcd would sustain the same growth for 23 additional years.

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Since its implementation, the City of Safford water distribution system computer model has been used to assess the capabilities of the City of Safford water distribution system. The water distribution system model has been applied to:

- Assess the effects of future development on the water system
- Validate and refine water system upgrades and modifications
- Evaluate the tank filling capabilities and adequacies of booster stations
- Troubleshoot portions of the water distribution system
- Develop water system operational procedures

- Performing daily water system calculations

Based on computer simulations of various sections of the City of Safford water distribution system the following areas of concern were identified in the City of Safford 20/20 Vision Plan.

Community of Salomon

Water system improvements are currently underway that will alleviate conveyance capacity issues within the Solomon water distribution system. Currently, the distribution system will allow a fire demand of 640 gpm. Upon completion of the proposed improvements, the Solomon water distribution system will provide at least 1,000 gpm in fire flow capacity.

Communities of Central and Webster Hill

The communities of Central and Webster Hill are both served by 2- and 4-inch diameter pipes which are inadequate for fire protection. Water is supplied to these two communities by an 8-inch diameter pipeline along Highway 70 and a 4-inch diameter pipeline along Palmer Lane and Webster Road. Near the LDS temple, where the 8- and 4-inch diameter pipelines meet, a fire flow of 500 gpm would drop the pressure within the Webster Hill subdivision to less than 20 psi. The maximum reliable fire flow to the temple area is about 400 gpm.

Town of Thatcher

A fire demand of 1,000 gpm imposed on the west end of the Town of Thatcher would cause an east to west drop in pressure of 54 to 34 psi across the town. This 20 psi drop in pressure indicates that the Thatcher distribution system is adequate but not very robust. A robust distribution through Thatcher will likely be necessary to alleviate the lack of adequate fire protection in Central and Webster Hill.



Hillcrest and Plateau Subdivisions

The Hillcrest and Plateau subdivisions are served mostly by 6-inch diameter pipe which is adequate for a 900 gpm fire demand. The Hillcrest and Plateau distribution systems will not provide 1,000 gpm of fire protection.

Thunderbird Hill Subdivision

The water distribution system within the Thunderbird Hill subdivision is made up of mostly 4- and 6-inch diameter pipe. Even with the local Thunderbird Hill water storage tank, the distribution system has inadequate conveyance capacity to accommodate a fire demand of 250 Gpm.

Water Reclamation

Severn Trent Services provides water and waste water treatment products and operating services to utilities, municipalities and commercial customers in selected key markets around the world. They manage wastewater discharges, operate treatment sites, develop advanced technologies and products and manage resources as well as potential impact on the environment. Their responsibility is to minimize environmental impact and use resources efficiently.



City of Safford Water Reclamation Plant.

Severn Trent Services provides sewer services to the City of Safford through their management, operation and maintenance of the city's 2MGD water reclamation plant. The City partnered with Severn Trent in September 2007 under an agreement between the city and Severn Trent that was effective until July 1, 2013. The agreement contains provisions for two five-year renewal options.

The support of Severn Trent's state, regional and national resources and City staff has brought numerous improvements to the facility that have benefited the city and the people of Safford positively impacting the city's wastewater treatment needs.

THE SAFFORD CITY-GRAHAM COUNTY LIBRARY

The Safford City-Graham County Library is a public library in Safford, Arizona serving Graham County, Greenlee County and Gila County. It is known locally by the abbreviated Safford Library. The Safford Library is located on 808 S 7th Ave in Safford among a district of governmental buildings, including Safford City Hall, Safford City Annex, and the Graham County Courthouse.

Jan Elliott served as its director from 2004-2012 and opened the organization to various new programs. Under Elliott's supervision, the library's primary focus was shifted to childhood literacy in 2008, partnering with programs such as Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and the online tutoring service Tutor.com.

In 2014, the library had 13,625 active users. An average of 8,000 people visit the library every month, using its computer services, books, rental movies, audiobooks and special programming. Story times for children 0-5 are held weekly.

Its current building, designed in an arrowhead layout, was purchased in 1991 and converted from a furniture store. It can be seen briefly in the background in Albert Brooks' film *Lost in America*. Prior to its current location, the library was located in the Oddfellows Home of Arizona, a former sanctuary for orphans and historic attraction, from 1963-1991. The two story Tudor Revival style of the historic building was split into two separate organizations, the bottom floor serving as the library and the top as a Safford museum.

As a result of the 2008 recession, the Safford Library saw deep budgetary cuts in 2009. Staff and programming were reduced. An annual fee of \$ 50.00 for non-resident users was proposed to aide funding. The communities of Graham County protested in editorials to the Eastern Arizona Courier, causing the Safford City Council to rescind the proposed charges.

In 2010 the establishment of a library district was proposed in a volunteer, community-led campaign to aid the Safford Library in its funding and prevent it from hypothetically closing. Graham County is one of the few in the state of Arizona not to have a collectively taxed library district.

The Safford Library is the home of the City of Safford Mayor and Council Chambers. The Safford Library offers a variety of programs for children, teens and adults. The E-learning program offers:

- Learning Languages
- Resume, Job and Computer Help @ Our Library
- Citizenship and Lifelong Learning
- Tutor.com
- Student Resources
- Computer Tutorials
- College Tutorials
- GED Preparation

Safford Library Expansion Needs

As mentioned before, during the Safford General Plan Design Charrette, the design team translated into a concept the community idea of a multi-purpose facility that potentially could include space for a new library. If located in Downtown Safford, such multi-purpose government or civic center could help revitalize downtown.



Multi-purpose Government Center Concept, Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center.

Safford Library's Role in Economic Development

The Safford Library enriches lives and builds community through opportunities to learn, know, interact, and grow. The Library's resources, community involvement, and leadership help people of all ages, from all walks of life, on their journey to reach their full potential.

Embracing the principles that excellence must be defined locally, be attainable, and be dynamic, the Safford Library offers free programs and services that make learning fun, transcend barriers, and improve quality of life in the region.



The Safford Library's objectives are to learn, discover, create, innovate and connect. To support its objectives, the library must:

- Encourage citizens to reach their potential to be a learner, educator and collaborator;
- Partner with educational institutions and communities in the region to create programs and spaces that reinforce creativity, increase productivity, and allow residents to support their community; and
- Strengthen the public and private partnerships needed to create programs and spaces that foster opportunity, make connections and support the exchange of ideas.

Graham County does not have a regional library system. The Safford City-Graham Library serves the entire region. If properly funded, the library could provide significant beneficial services to the region, including employment and job training, and 21st century skill development for teens and adults. A skilled workforce is needed to attract higher-wage industry to the region.

The library could play a critical role in the economic development of the region by supporting job training, nursing, health, and arts programs, providing meeting and conference space for community and business events, and by encouraging further collaboration with other service agencies.

The library's vital functions as a destination, a place of discovery and an active partner in community building, career development, and job training further economic development. Exploring the possibility of integrating the library with other community services and functions to create vital activity centers can invigorate and diversify the City's economic development portfolio.

The Safford Library could become a vibrant tool for economic development by:

- Supporting flexibility in programming to embrace the emerging role of libraries as educational centers for new technologies and innovation and support existing library initiatives and programs
- Providing access to resources, continuing education, skill development, job training and educational opportunity
- Giving children a strong start in learning
- Providing places where all community members, young and old, can pursue learning in a collaborative, dynamic, and creative environment.

The library is currently in the process of preparing its strategic plan.

Electric Utilities

The City of Safford's Electric Department provides safe and reliable power to approximately 3,970 residential and commercial customers. The electric crew consists of seven employees that are responsible for the maintenance, repair, and construction of the system.

Net Metering Policy

The City of Safford adopted a Net Metering Policy in May of 2010. This policy allows customers to participate in a renewable energy option. The City of Safford's Net Metering Program offers the potential for the City's customers to realize financial benefits from installing renewable energy systems so that customers will be able to offset the cost of electricity they buy from the City.

The City's customers are encouraged to participate in expanding renewable energy in Arizona. The net metering option helps reduce customers' monthly cost of energy by generating a portion of their power.



It may also help to increase the reliability of the City's grid and to increase the production of power at times of peak usage when the City's purchased power costs may be higher.

Customers must be pre-approved for enrollment in the program by submitting plans, providing equipment specifications and proposed coordination with the City's Electric Division Manager.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is a clean burning fossil fuel found beneath the earth's surface. Because of its efficiency and ease of use, it has become the most popular source of home heating in America. Natural gas is odorless. To ensure provide safety, an odor of rotten eggs is added to the gas so it can be recognized and reported.

Natural gas is piped from wells in Texas and Oklahoma. Over two million miles of pipe transport both liquid and gases throughout the country. Natural gas provides one fourth of the country's energy, serving 69 million customers. The City of Safford serves 3,852 customers and maintains over 71 miles of distribution piping.

Natural Gas Safety

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the natural gas delivery system has the best safety record of any energy delivery system. Natural gas lines are mostly buried, and all systems are heavily monitored by state and federal regulators. Adherence to these strict codes has helped the City of Safford maintain a history of safe delivery of natural gas. City staff continuously monitor the system to protect the life and property.

Gas Pipe Locations

In Safford, large gas mains have markers intermittently placed above ground to give their approximate location. Maps and locating equipment mark lines as accurately as possible.

Safford natural gas system consists of:

- 74 miles of gas main
- 46.5 miles of service line
- 3,475 services and meter sets

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Safford landfill is owned and operated by the City of Safford. According to a study conducted by Kimley-Horn and Associates the current costs to close the landfill include \$7 million in related fees, with an additional \$2.7 million related to post-closure costs. Instead, the City is working to extend the life of the landfill by another 30 years.

The new plan calls for the landfill to be extended by another 4 feet vertically from the original plan. Doing so will result in the same effect without incurring the cost of providing a new liner.

Tapping and selling reserves of methane gas trapped in the landfill did not prove feasible to offset the costs. Methane levels in the landfill are currently well below marketable levels. The City will continue to monitor methane emission levels and re-assess this option.

The City is currently implementing a recycle program.



Legislative Framework

Section 9-461.05 of the Arizona Statutes requires municipalities to designate the proposed general distribution and location and extent of such uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land as may be appropriate to the municipality.

(b) Includes a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan.

(c) Identifies specific programs and policies that the municipality may use to promote infill or compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.

(d) Includes consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use.

(e) Includes policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses, including the range of uses existing in the municipality when the plan is adopted, readopted or amended.

(f) For cities and towns with territory in the vicinity of a military airport or ancillary military facility as defined in section 28-8461, includes consideration of military airport or ancillary military facility operations.

On or before December 31, 2005, if a city or town includes land in a high noise or accident potential zone as defined in section 28-8461, the city or town shall identify the boundaries of the high noise or accident potential zone in its general plan for purposes of planning land uses in the high noise or accident potential zone that are

compatible with the operation of the military airport or ancillary military facility pursuant to section 28-8481, subsection J.

(g) Includes sources of currently identified aggregates from maps that are available from state agencies, policies to preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development and policies to avoid incompatible land uses, except that this subdivision shall not be construed to affect any permitted underground storage facility or limit any person's right to obtain a permit for an underground storage facility pursuant to title 45, chapter 3.1.

For cities and towns having a population of more than two thousand five hundred persons but less than ten thousand persons and whose population growth rate exceeded an average of two per cent per year for the ten year period before the most recent United States decennial census and for cities and towns having a population of ten thousand or more persons according to the most recent United States decennial census, the general plan shall include, and for other cities and towns the general plan may include:

1. An open space element that includes:

(a) A comprehensive inventory of open space areas, recreational resources and designations of access points to open space areas and resources.

(b) An analysis of forecasted needs, policies for managing and protecting open space areas and resources and implementation strategies to acquire additional open space areas and further establish recreational resources.

(c) Policies and implementation strategies designed to promote a regional system of integrated open space and recreational



City of Safford General Plan

resources and a consideration of any existing regional open space plans.

2. A growth area element, specifically identifying those areas, if any, that are particularly suitable for planned multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses, such as residential, office, commercial, tourism and industrial uses. This element shall include policies and implementation strategies that are designed to:

(a) Make automobile, transit and other multimodal circulation more efficient, make infrastructure expansion more economical and provide for a rational pattern of land development.

(b) Conserve significant natural resources and open space areas in the growth area and coordinate their location to similar areas outside the growth area's boundaries.

(c) Promote the public and private construction of timely and financially sound infrastructure expansion through the use of infrastructure funding and financing planning that is coordinated with development activity.

General Plan New Direction

A number of fiscal, planning and economic development opportunities and challenges have taken place since the adoption of the last general plan. When added to state requirements and to the input provided by the Safford community during the Envision Safford public input process, such opportunities and challenges require the City to appropriately direct development to:

- Strengthen and establish the public and private partnerships required to support a healthy region;
- Take competitive advantage of the City's regional location as the gateway of Southeastern Arizona and the Gila Valley;
- Attract and retain the retail, services, and employment needed to appropriately serve the existing and projected population and to develop a strong revenue base for the community;
- Responsibly respond to development pressures;
- Efficiently manage the anticipated growth;
- Take economic advantage of the Safford Regional Airport;
- Maximize the use of developable land;
- Restore the Gila River;
- Provide the open space and recreation needed to support a healthy community
- Respond to possible changes in mining operations
- Protect agricultural areas while providing opportunities for growth and expansion.

In order to achieve these, an integrated approach is necessary. Success is contingent on numerous variables such as downtown revitalization, extension of US Highway 191, transportation network improvements, road extensions and realignments, Gila River restoration. These efforts must combine to produce the synergies necessary to create the economically vibrant community envisioned during the week-long design charrette.

The long-term sustainability and vitality of Safford require a set of strategies and partnerships that take into consideration these complexities. The next step is to identify specific growth management strategies designed to promote the long-term viability of each planning area while weighing in the natural environment.



The Vision Statement, guiding principles, goals, policies and implementation measures needed to create a sustainable destination are provided in the major elements of the Policy Plan volume. The Growth Areas Element, included in the Policy Plan volume, describes these elements and serves as the foundation of the Policy Plan.

This *Background and Current Conditions Technical Report* summarizes the background and current conditions necessary to support the Policy Volume of the General Plan.

General Plan Framework

The Growth Areas Element sets the framework necessary to address the multiplicity of challenges, maximize the opportunities, increase the long-term viability of Safford and strengthen the fiscal vitality of the City. This approach identifies character areas and defines growth areas, infill areas and redevelopment areas based on each area's specific needs, opportunities and challenges. The growth areas element identifies:

- Areas of the City where future growth, employment, industry, and higher density development may be appropriate;
- It views land use and transportation network in an integrated manner in order to provide the connectivity needed to support orderly and well-managed growth;
- The quality of life activities and regional opportunities needed to retain Safford's youth and to attract high quality employment;
- Attract the latest technology, advance telecommunications infrastructure and bio-industry markets; and

- Opportunities to create a diversified, vibrant and viable economy that includes the strong retail/service base needed to provide community services to future generations.

MAJOR DEFINITIONS

Planning Areas

All growth, infill, and character areas are planning areas.

Growth Areas

Establishing growth areas as part of the General Plan planning process is mandated by the State of Arizona Statutes. These are areas with growth potential located inside the City limits and within the Safford Designated Growth Boundary or Study Area.

Infill Areas

Areas of the built environment with few vacant parcels available for development.

Character Areas

Character areas present unique opportunities and challenges requiring area-specific strategies. Examples of Character Areas in Safford include Safford Downtown, Neighborhoods, and Gila River Restoration Area.

Safford's Growth Areas

The north, east, and south growth areas are carefully planned to expand Safford's revenue base, support sustainable agricultural practices, agribusiness, and clean energy, maintain the small town feel of Safford while invigorating the region's economic engine, sustain high quality neighborhoods and vibrant industry, provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to the cultural and entertainment heart of the community, Safford's Historic Downtown and restore the Gila River as a natural resource, regional recreation and economic development asset.

Exhibit 10 shows the entire City of Safford Planning Area or Study Area. **Exhibit 11** shows the north, east and south growth areas.

NORTH GROWTH AREA

The North Growth Area is located south of the Gila River and north of US Highway 70. This area supports:

- US Highway 191 alignment to alleviate traffic along US Highway 70, improve regional access and mobility, provide flood control, and open economic development opportunities.
- High quality commerce, industry, employment, mixed-use and residential development.
- Higher education in close proximity to regional recreation and sports facilities and Downtown.
- A thriving US Highway 70 Commercial Corridor that complements Safford's Historic Downtown.

- Resort, equestrian, and tourist-oriented industry in close proximity to the Gila River
- 20th Avenue, 14th Avenue, Welker Road, 1st Street, Hollywood, and Montierth Road Alignments.



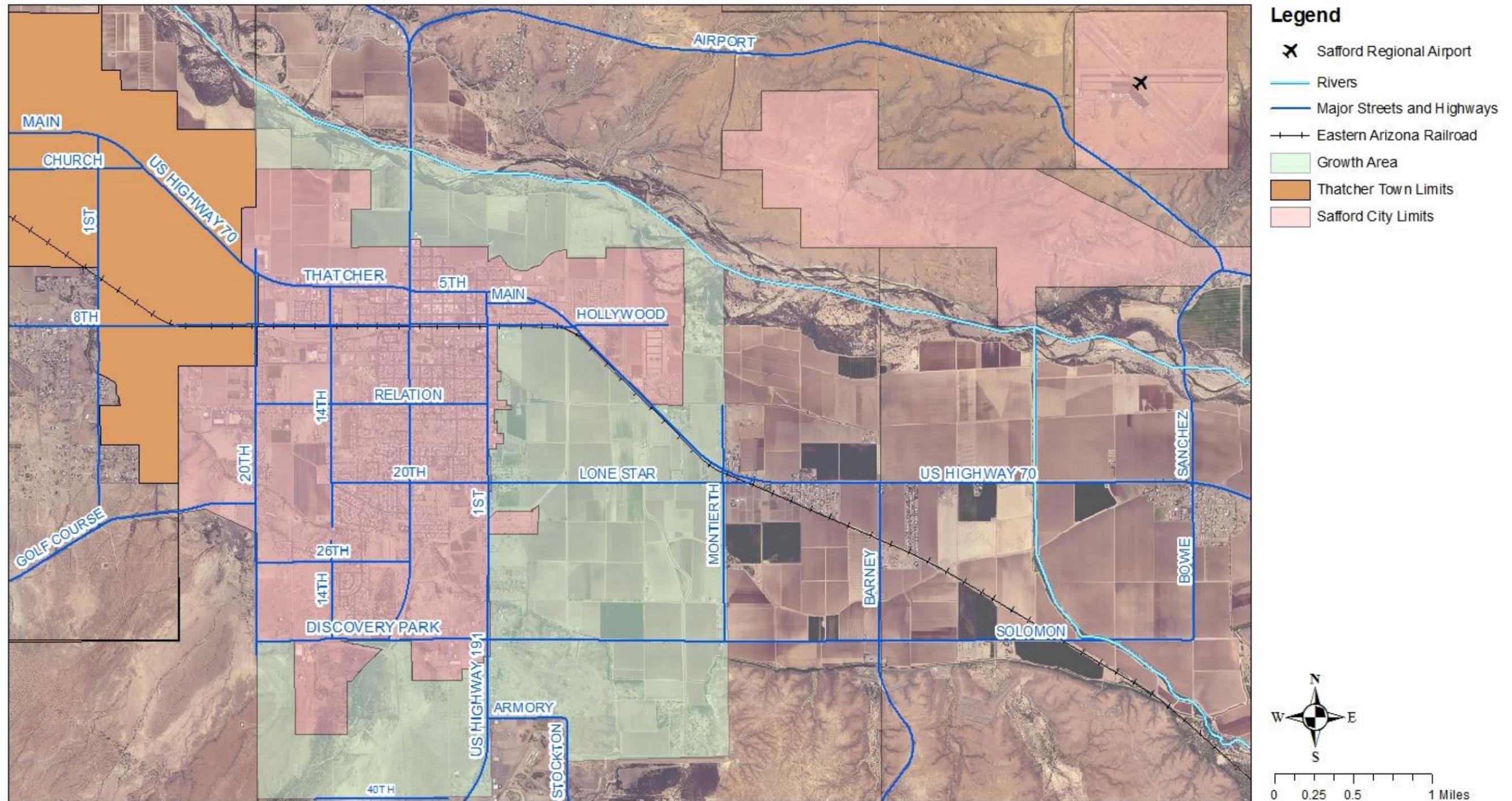
North Growth Area

Exhibit 12 shows conceptual road alignments within the North Growth Area. Conceptual road alignments shown for this growth area require a regional approach. The City will need to work closely with ADOT, SEAGO, Graham County Flood Control District, Graham County, Town of Thatcher, the Safford regional economic development team and other major stakeholders in that area. Flood control, road alignments and other infrastructure needed to support economic development in the area, river restoration, and regional recreation efforts must be master planned in an integrated manner in an infrastructure plan and must consider:

- Gila River Restoration;
- The establishment of a Regional Recreation District along the Gila River;
- Channelization of the Gila River;
- Regional Economic impact;
- The preparation of cost-benefit analysis to support highest and best use; and
- Other opportunities and challenges that may arise during the master planning process.

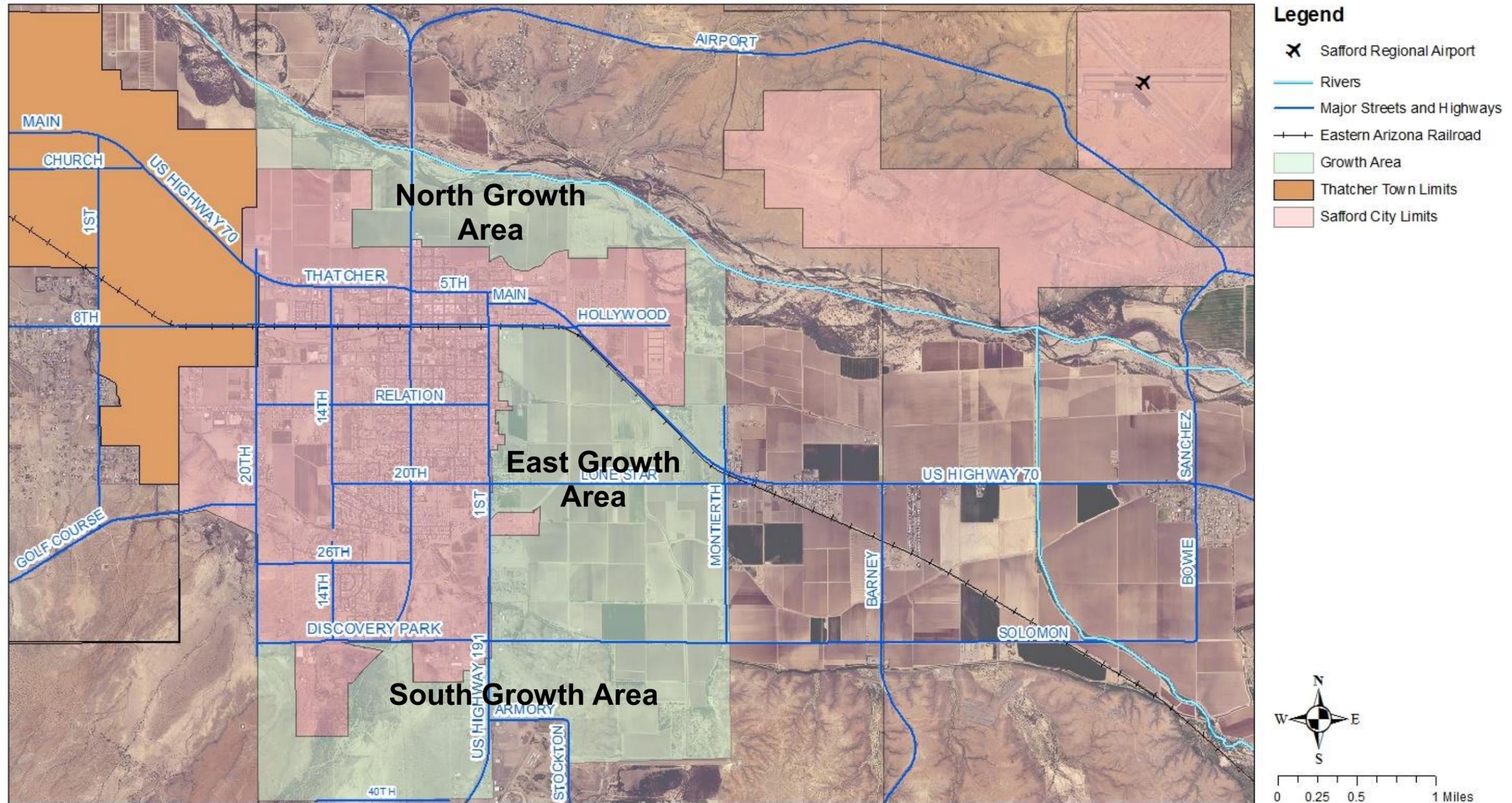
Such an integrated approach will prevent major pitfalls.

Exhibit 10: City of Safford Planning Area or Study Area



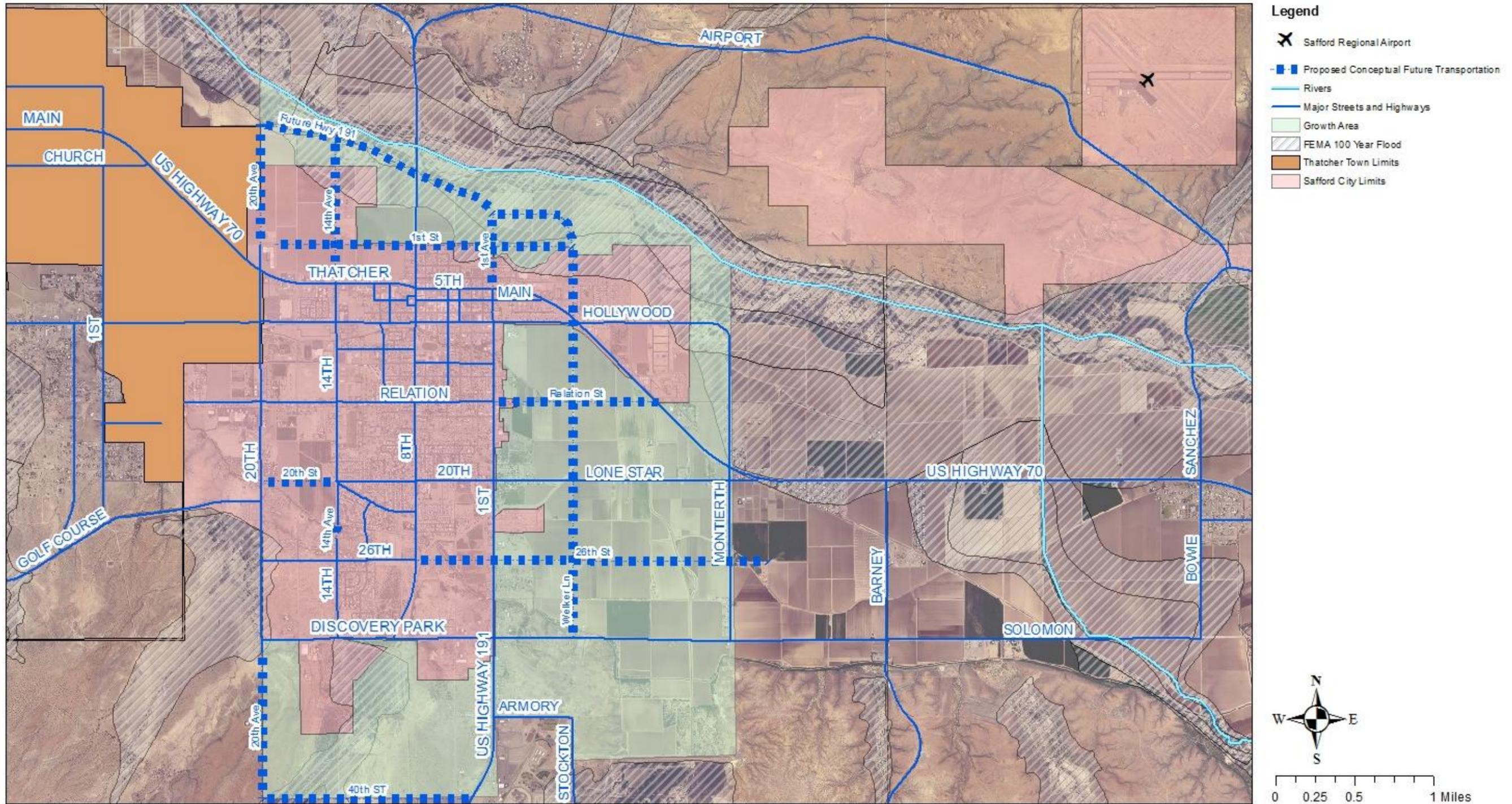
Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016

Exhibit 11: City of Safford Growth Areas



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016

Exhibit 12: City of Safford Proposed Conceptual Future Transportation/Circulation System



Source: City of Safford GIS Department, 2016



Gila River Restoration Project

The Gila River Restoration Project, a proposed multi-jurisdiction, wide-ranging mitigation strategy to restore the Gila River segment stretching from Safford to Pima, may support a vital economic development strategy for recreation, resort development, geo-tourism and eco-tourism through:

- Construction of a levee channelizing the river in conjunction with the extension of Highway 191 to reduce traffic along US Highway 70 and open the area for industry and employment;
- Removal of Salt Cedar and other invasive, highly flammable, fire prone, and high water consuming species;
- Reintroduction of native trees;
- Habitat restoration for endangered birds and wildlife;
- Flood protection, wildfire fire prevention, and water conservation;
- Passive recreation along the river;
- Regional park including multipurpose facilities, sports complex, ball courts, and horseback riding facilities.
- Community garden featuring low-water, contained farming, and sustainable food production.

A study is recommended to identify cost-effective and feasible approaches. Such study will require working together with numerous federal, state, and local agencies and coordinating with regional as well as local stakeholders. In addition, should study should be conducted in conjunction with the recommended infrastructure master planning process mentioned in the previous page. Partners in this planning process may include, but not be limited to:

- City of Safford
- Graham County
- Graham County Flood Control District

- Town of Thatcher
- Town of Pima
- SEAGO Economic Development
- Gila Valley Economic Development Council
- Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Arizona State Land Department
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold
- Arizona Rock Products Association
- Eastern Arizona College
- University of Arizona (UofA)
- Northern Arizona University (NAU)
- Arizona State University (ASU)
- Other major stakeholders

EAST GROWTH AREA

The East Growth Area extends north-south from Solomon Road to Hollywood Drive and US Highway 70 and east-west from US Highway 91 to Montierth Lane. Historically, this area has been associated with raw crop agricultural uses. Currently, the area includes cotton and corn fields, residential areas and the Safford Agricultural Research Center. Road extensions needed to support this area are conceptualized on **Exhibit 12** included in the previous page. Road extensions are proposed for 26th Street, Welker Road, Hollywood Drive, and Montierth Lane.

This growth area could support:

- US Highway 191 Commercial Corridor
- Sustainable agribusiness, agriculture, and food production
- Agricultural research
- Solar energy generation facilities
- High quality residential development
- Industry and commerce north of Relation Street and in proximity to the railroad



City of Safford General Plan

- US Highway 70 Commercial Corridor

Safford Agricultural Research Center



The Safford Agricultural Research Center, a University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences facility, provides research and service to farmers in Graham, Greenlee and Cochise counties. Currently located outside of Safford in Graham County, this 63-acre agricultural center has been a performance testing site in the long staple cotton breeding program for more than 30 years.

Solving problems in cotton is a particular focus; variety testing for a number of field crops is another. The Agricultural Center also provides the infrastructure for Cooperative Extension agricultural research throughout the southeastern part of the state.

Crops under study include long and short staple cotton, durum and winter wheat, barley, triticale, alfalfa, vegetables, fruit trees, pecans and pistachios. Recent studies have also included crops that would be useful for biomass production.

This station cooperates closely with the New Mexico Crop Improvement Association in testing New Mexico Acala cotton varieties throughout southeastern Arizona. The Center was deliberately selected for its problem soils—both saline and alkaline—and saline well water, to enable research specific to local needs to be conducted on-site. Researchers focus on determining the crops and crop varieties that

may be economically produced under these conditions.

This installation has been a leader in Ag-in-the-Classroom educational programs. Recently the Edu-Venture Trail was constructed, which ties the agricultural education program from the past with basic science curriculum education. It was designed to serve as an outdoors science laboratory for the K-12 grade levels.

The Safford Agricultural Center is a regional asset supporting sustainable agricultural practices in Safford, Southeastern Arizona and New Mexico.

SOUTH GROWTH AREA

The South Growth Area extends from the proposed alignment with 20th Avenue on the west to the proposed alignment of Montierth Lane on the east and south of Discovery Park/Solomon Road as indicated on **Exhibit 11**.

This area currently includes extraction and few industrial uses. The area includes Safford's Southern Main Gateway and could support:

- US Highway 191 Commercial Corridor
- Industry
- Aggregate extraction (existing)
- Solar and wind energy generation facilities
- High quality residential development on steeper slopes where other types of development would not be feasible.

Safford’s Character Areas

In addition to the growth areas described in the previous section, several distinct character areas have been identified within Safford. These character areas provide the framework necessary to formulate the area-specific master plans, infrastructure plans, redevelopment, infill and revitalization efforts, and economic development strategies that will support Safford’s vision and assist in the implementation of the Safford General Plan.

Each character area presents a set of unique characteristics, development, infill or redevelopment potential, opportunities, and challenges. **Exhibit 13** shows Safford’s character areas.

GILA RIVER RESTORATION

Discussed in the North Growth Area section, the Gila River Restoration area encompasses the Gila River corridor. The Safford General Plan Policy volume addresses this character area.

AGRICULTURE/AGRIBUSINESS/ FUTURE RESIDENTIAL

Discussed in the East Growth Area section, the agriculture, agribusiness and low density residential character of this area supports a mix of compatible land uses in conformance with the East Growth Area potential.

SAFFORD NEIGHBORHOODS

Including Safford’s established neighborhoods, this character area supports enhancements and amenities that increase the quality of life of established neighborhoods. It also provides guidance for future development adjacent to existing ones.



Irrigation Canal 8th Street and 8th Avenue (before)



Conceptual Linear Park along Irrigation Canal 8th Street and 8th Avenue (After), The Planning Center, 2015

SAFFORD DOWNTOWN

Extending north-south from 8th Street on the south to the north side of US Highway 70 and east west from the Intersection of Welker Lane with US Highway 70 on the east and 11th Avenue on the west, this character area serves as the civic, cultural, arts, retail, and historic core of Safford.



City of Safford General Plan



Downtown Safford's Golden Age covered a period of nearly forty years from the end of World War II until the early 1980's. Downtown Safford was the commercial center of an area extending approximately forty miles in all directions. Cotton, copper and cattle were still the three "C's" of the Arizona economy.

A healthy agricultural sector and full employment at the Phelps-Dodge Morenci supported direct employment and strong secondary jobs in the retail and service sectors. Wages in the copper industry were at historic highs, and the industry provided economic security for three generations of miners.

Beginning in 1983, the economic climate of Downtown Safford took a sharp decline with the loss of mining jobs. Because Safford was, and remains, the primary trade center for Clifton and Morenci, as well as the Gila Valley communities, the 1983 strike had a devastating effect in the economy.

Past Revitalization Efforts

In January of 1990 a group of surviving business and property owners sought to reverse Downtown's decline through affiliation with the Arizona Main Street Program. A plan was adopted, designation as a National Main Street City was obtained along with accompanying technical assistance from the Arizona

Department of Commerce. A public/private partnership was formed with the City of Safford to fund a Main Street office, and a Downtown Manager was hired. Revitalization efforts did not materialize.

In 1997 downtown business owners decided to reorganize and attempt to revitalize downtown. The Safford Downtown Association, Inc. was formed as a non-profit corporation. The association was successful in securing the services of the University of Arizona College of Architecture in 1999. An interdisciplinary design team developed a streetscape design and circulation master plan. The plan was never implemented.

In 2003, the Downtown Safford Revitalization Plan was completed. And in 2007, a comprehensive design charrette took place. This last effort served as the foundation for the streetscape improvements recently completed along Main Street in Safford.



The recent recession further slowed down downtown revitalization efforts. A Façade Grant is currently being implemented to improve the aesthetics of downtown and attract businesses as well as visitors.



City of Safford General Plan

During the Safford General Plan Design Charrette conducted in 2015 as part of this General Plan Update planning process, the community continued to express the need to revitalize Safford's downtown. Incorporating participants' ideas and the themes from previous efforts, The Planning Center planning and design team prepared conceptual images expressing the input received by the community during the week-long design charrette and throughout the Envision Safford community input process.



Street Farmers Market and Art Fair



Art Competitions

Safford's downtown is intended to be a walkable destination with opportunities for mixed-use development along its edges. The Downtown will offer opportunities for outdoor activities that attract visitors to its retail stores, restaurants and cafes, including, but not limited to:

- Farmers market
- Art fairs
- Performances
- Art competitions
- Outdoor activities
- Parades
- Special events
- Entertainment

Downtown Character Area Concept: 8th Street Downtown Community Center



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Downtown Character Area Concept: Historic District Gateway (Intersection of Main Street and US Highway 191)



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Downtown Character Area Concept: Adaptive Reuse of Cotton Gin, Market Place, and Historic District Mixed Use Concept (8th Street)



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Downtown Character Area Concept: Multi-purpose Civic Center (May Include New Library, Government Services, Police Station)



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

MEDICAL CORRIDOR

This character area is located along 20th Avenue and supports the expansion of Mount Graham Medical Regional Center as well as a variety of medical and medical support services, including quality assisted living.



Existing Conditions along 20th Avenue (Before)



Existing Conditions along 20th Avenue (After)

COMMERCE AND EMPLOYMENT

This character area located in the North Growth Area and extends west to 20th Avenue and the Safford/Thatcher corporate boundary, south to Main Street and to Highway 70, and north and east to the boundaries of the Gila River Restoration Character Area.

This character area supports:

- Commerce and employment
- Regional retail
- Higher education
- High density residential
- Mixed-use
- Resort, lodging, conference and tourist-oriented industry
- Courtyards and Plazas
- Parks, recreation and trails



COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY CORRIDOR

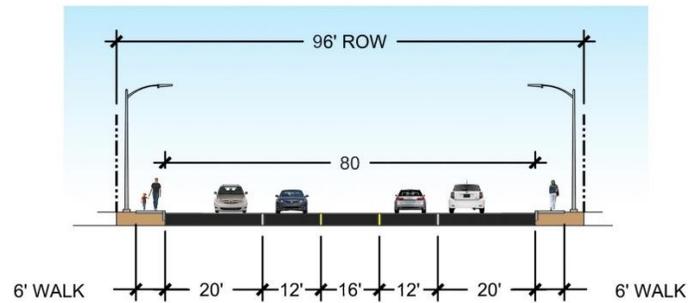
The US Highway 191 segment (from Safford’s southern gateway to US Highway 70) and the US Highway 70 segment (from Montierth Lane to the western gateway of the City at the entrance of Safford Historic Downtown) are designated Commercial Highway Corridor. US Highway 70 supports commerce and employment-oriented uses and UA Highway 191 supports commerce and serves adjacent neighborhoods.



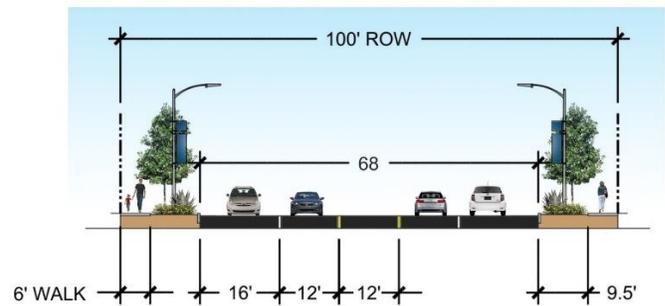
Highway 70 Conceptual Right-of Way, Option 2 (Median) and Round About at Entrance of Downtown and Main Street Illustrating Safford’s Eastern Gateway, The Planning Center, 2015

Commercial Highway Corridor Road Cross-sections

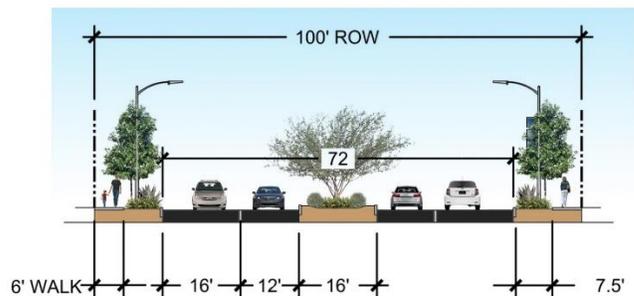
The following cross-sections depict existing and conceptual right-of-way for these corridors.



Highway 191 and 70 Existing Right-of Way, 2015



Highway 191 and 70 Conceptual Right-of Way, Option 1 (Turn Lane), The Planning Center, 2015



Highway 191 and 70 Conceptual Right-of Way, Option 2 (Median), The Planning Center, 2015

SAFFORD REGIONAL AIRPORT

In 2006, in recognition of the importance of aviation as a key component of economic development and transportation planning, the Safford Regional Airport Master Plan was completed. The plan assessed the role of the airport in the region and provided guidance regarding future airport development priorities. While important, the master plan was conducted prior to the recession and is now 9 years old. A post-recession update of the Safford Regional Airport Master Plan is needed to properly assess the current opportunities and challenges. In addition, the airport could benefit from the preparation of a Regional Airport Economic Development Strategy.



AGGREGATE/EXTRACTION

In conformance with Arizona Revised Statutes, this land use protects existing aggregate and/or extraction businesses currently operating within the City of Safford planning area. The following strategies apply:

- Support existing aggregate/extraction businesses operating within the Safford planning area.
- Avoid encroachment of incompatible land uses into aggregate/extraction areas as required by the Arizona Revised Statutes.
- Map aggregate/extraction areas.
- Work collaboratively with this industry.

INDUSTRY

There are three areas within the City offering opportunities for industry and employment generating land uses and include lands:

- East of US Highway 191 and South of US Highway 70 in close proximity to the railroad
- East of and US Highway 191 and North of US Highway 70
- West of US Highway 191 and north and south of Discovery Park Boulevard

GILA RIVER REGIONAL RECREATION AND SPORTS COMPLEX

If properly planned, the restoration of the Gila River, the alignment of US Highway 191 through the North Growth Area, and the utilization of flood plain areas along the river for compatible uses such as passive or user-based recreation and sports fields, can position the City as a regional destination for recreation, eco-tourism and geo-tourism. These efforts can also ignite the economic development of the region. Success is contingent to the conscious and careful study of opportunities and challenges along the Gila River and the establishment of the regional public/private partnerships needed to support such interdependent efforts.



Parks, Recreation, Shared Paths, Nature Trails and Open Space Master Plan

A Parks, Recreation, Shared Paths, Nature Trails and Open Space Master Plan is recommended to address the local and regional needs and connect the different recreational opportunities and programs scattered throughout the City, including the Safford Golf Club and other parks and recreational spots. This master planning effort should:

- Analyze current recreation facilities and programs
- Compare existing services with national standards

- Establish a hierarchy of parks for Safford (pocket, neighborhood, community and regional parks)
- Assess the establishment of a recreation fee for non-residents
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a Regional Recreation District.



This master plan could also identify safe bicycle and running routes and benefit from Healthy Communities funds. These funds are available to communities for the establishment of activities and programs that increase activity levels of users and support quality of life. A Plan4Health approach that combines physical activity with disease prevention is becoming the current trend throughout the US.

The Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex character area could include:

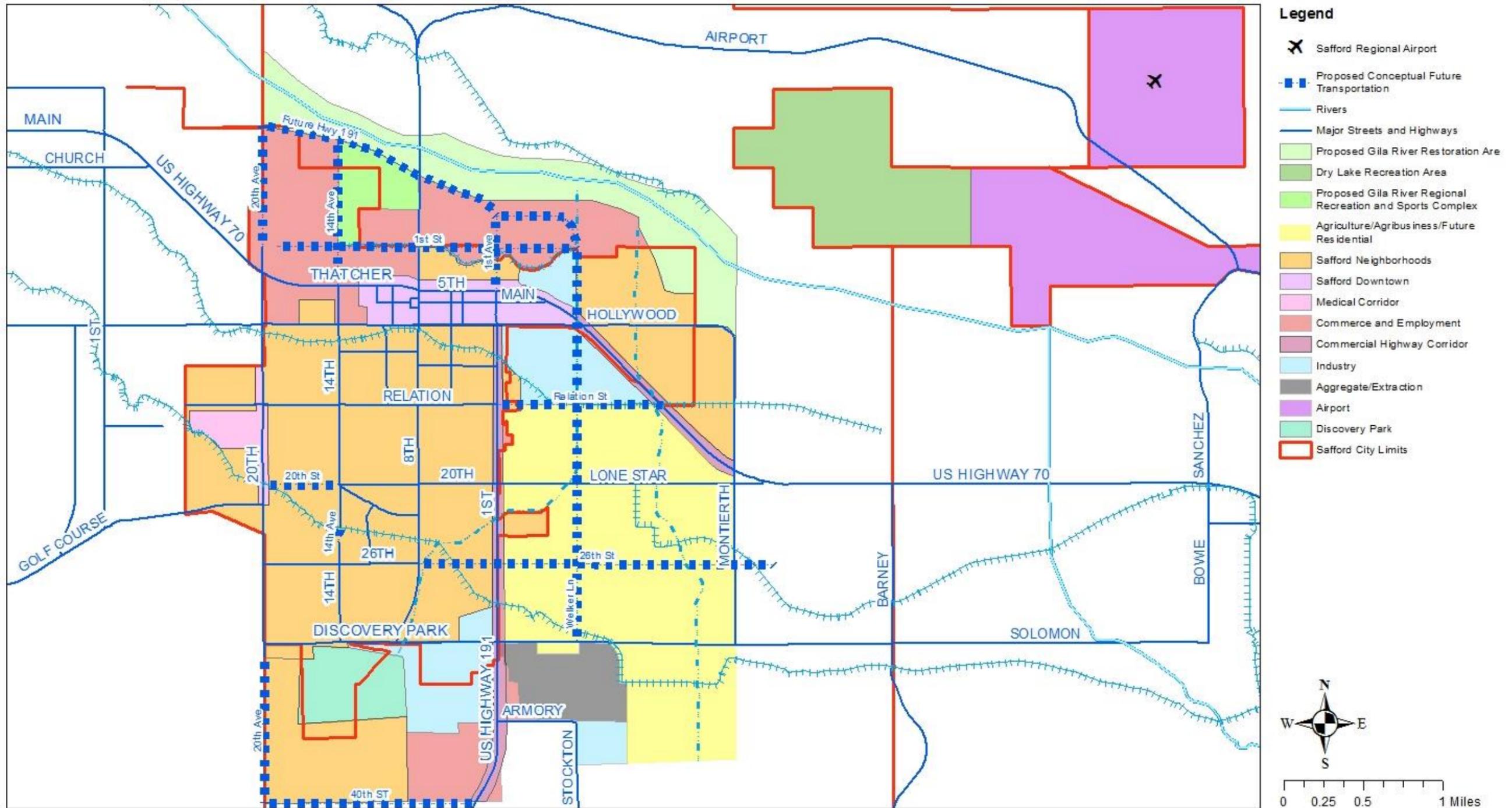
- Passive recreation and equestrian trails along the river
- Regional recreation multipurpose facilities
- Sports complex and ball fields
- Indoor and outdoor ball courts
- Parks, nature study areas, and hiking trails
- Horseback riding trails and facilities

Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex Concept



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

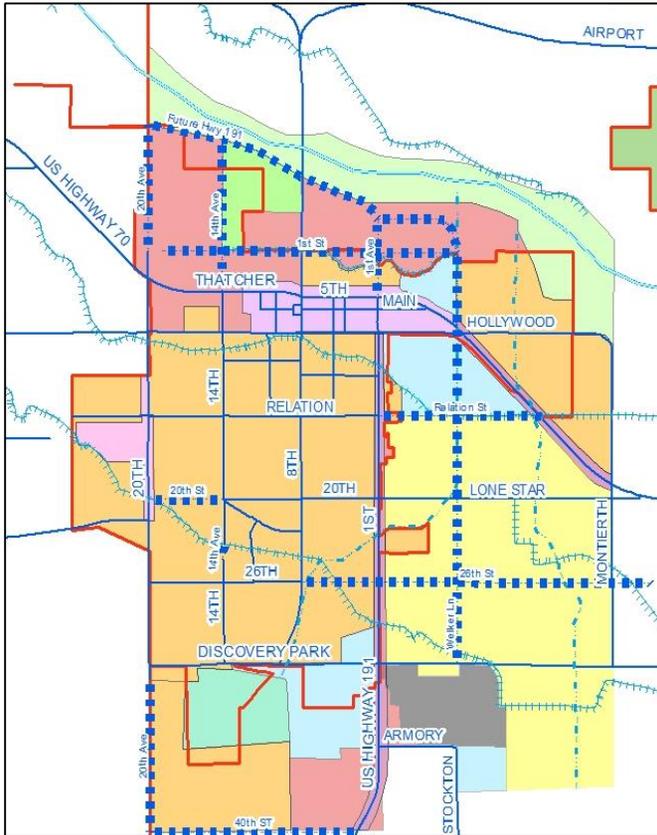
Exhibit 13: Safford's Character Areas



Source: City of Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015 and City of Safford GIS Department, 2016

Gila River Restoration Character Area

Gila River Restoration Character Area



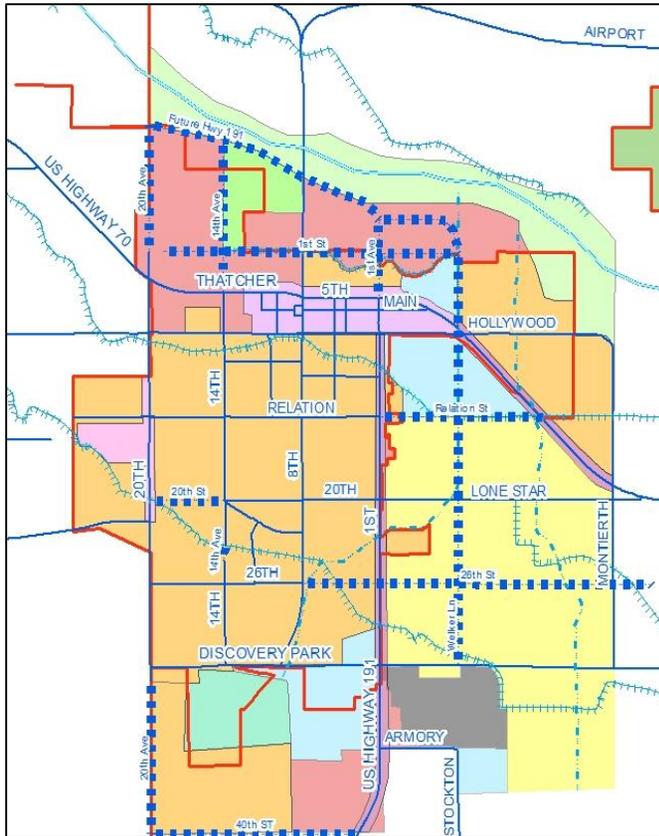
- River restoration
- Habitat restoration for endangered birds and wildlife
- Flood protection, wildfire fire prevention, and water conservation
- Passive recreation along the river, nature and hiking trails, and horseback riding trails and facilities.
- Geo-tourism and eco-tourism uses

Legend

- Proposed Gila River Restoration Area

Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Agriculture/Agribusiness/Future Residential



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

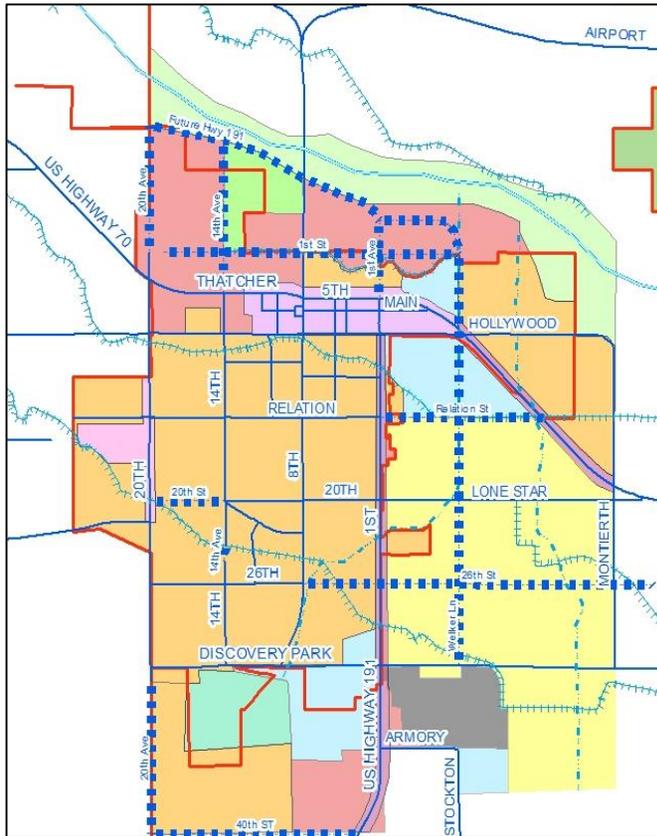
Agriculture/Agribusiness/Future Residential Character Area

- New residential and non-residential development protect the agricultural, agribusiness and low density residential character of this area
- New development within this area support the intent of the East and South Growth areas.
- Land uses permitted within this area include:
 - ~ US 191 Highway Corridor
 - ~ Sustainable agribusiness, agriculture and food production
 - ~ Agricultural research
 - ~ Residential
 - ~ Commercial uses supporting the character of the area

Legend

- Agriculture/Agribusiness/Future Residential

Safford Neighborhoods Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Safford Neighborhoods Character Area

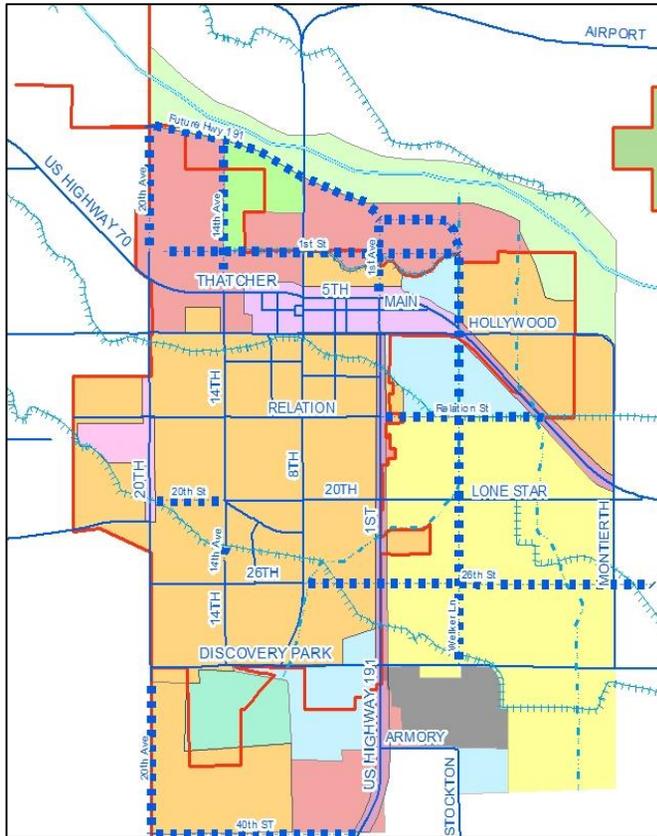
This character area supports enhancements and amenities that increase the quality of life of establish neighborhoods:

- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Landscape enhancements
- Community and neighborhood parks
- Community-oriented commercial at the intersection of arterial roads
- Revitalization, redevelopment, and clean up
- Extension of 26th Street

Legend

- Neighborhoods Character Area

Safford Downtown Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Safford Downtown Character Area

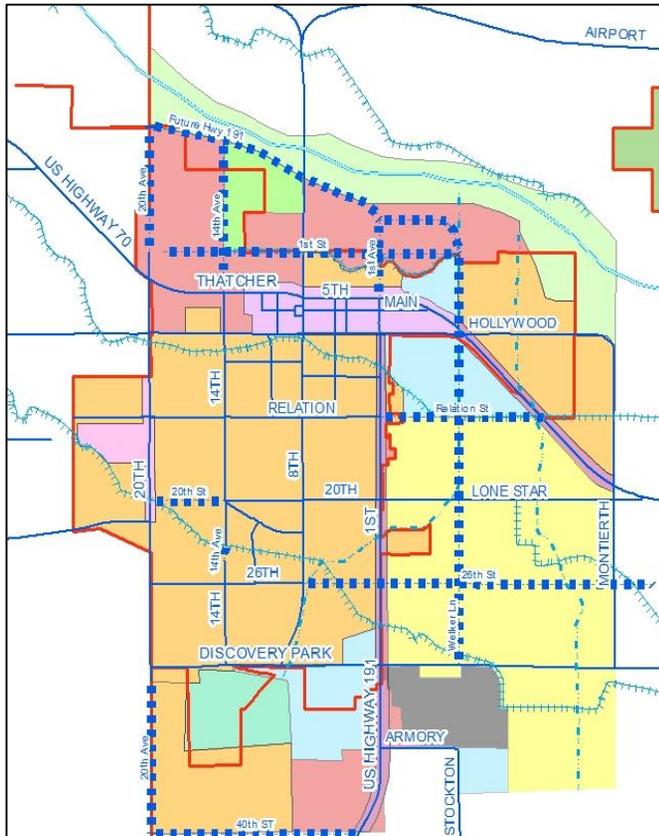
The Downtown serves as the civic, cultural, arts, retail and historic core of Safford. It supports:

- Government and civic uses
- Retail, commercial, services, and professional offices
- Mixed-use and higher density multifamily development
- Civic Center including Library, Police and other Public services
- Multi-purpose Community Center
- Special events and activities
- Centralized and shared public parking
- Farmers market and outdoor performance space

Legend

- Safford Downtown Character Area

Medical Corridor Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Medical Corridor Character Area

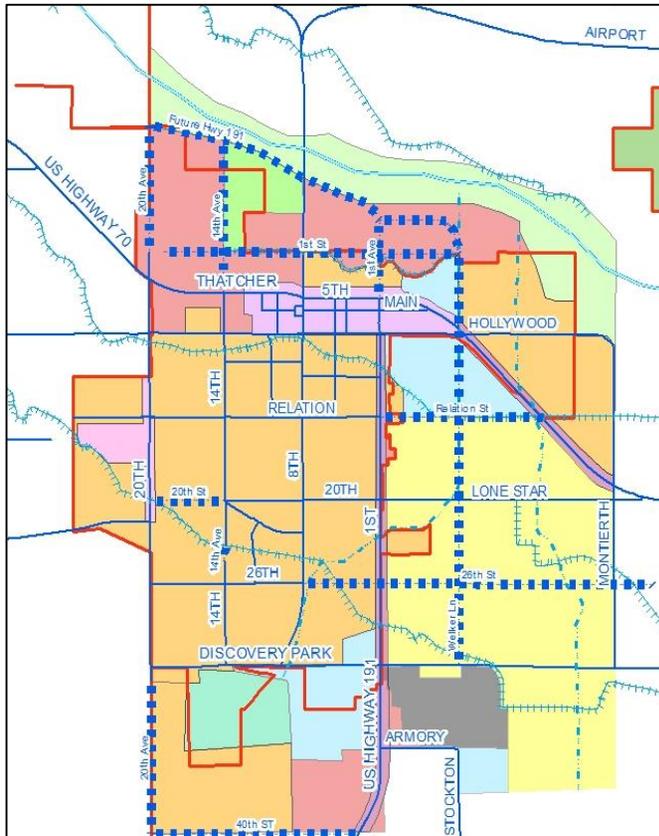
This character area supports the expansion of Mount Graham Medical Regional Center and the introduction of:

- Medical offices
- Health campus
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Medical instrumentation and technology
- Off-patient clinics
- Nurse Practitioners offices
- Urgent care
- Physical therapy and alternative medicine
- Quality assisted living
- Other medical support services and industries

Legend

- Medical Corridor Character Area

Commerce and Employment Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Commerce and Employment

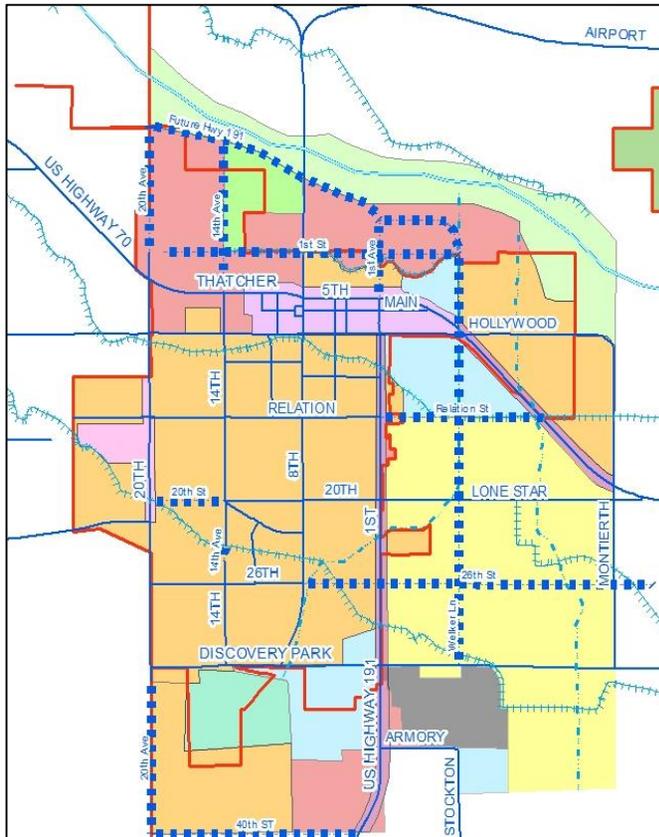
This character area located in the North Growth Area and extends west to 20th Avenue and the Safford/Thatcher corporate boundary, south to Main Street and to Highway 70, and north and east to the boundaries of the Gila River Restoration Character Area. This character area supports:

- Commerce and employment
- Regional retail
- Higher education
- High density residential
- Mixed-use
- Resort, lodging, conference and tourist-oriented industry
- Courtyards and plazas
- Parks, recreation and trails

Legend

- Commerce and Employment Character Area

Commercial Highway Corridor Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Commercial Highway Corridor

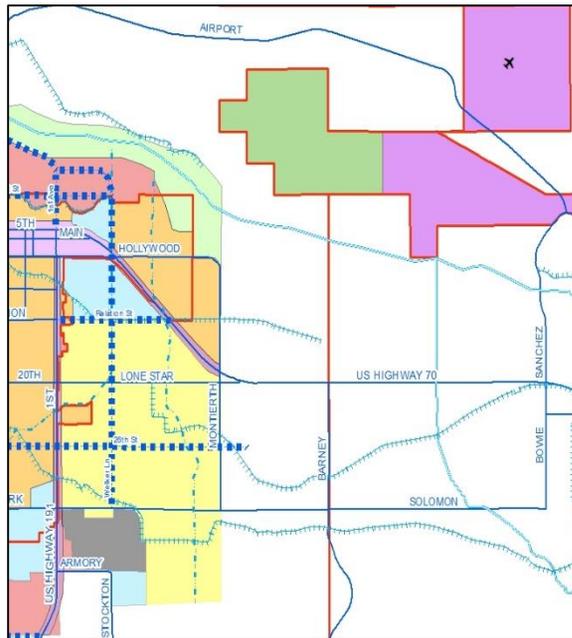
US Highway 191 and 70 support opportunities for highway corridor development with two distinct characters:

- **US Highway 70**
 - ~ Serves as the east-west spine of the City
 - ~ Includes the east and west gateways to the Gila River Valley (City of Safford and Town of Thatcher) and Safford’s downtown
- **US Highway 191**
 - ~ Serves as the north-south spine of the City
 - ~ Includes the southern gateway to Safford’s Historic Downtown
 - ~ Supports commerce and serves adjacent neighborhoods

Legend

- Commercial Highway Corridor Character Area

Safford Regional Airport Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Safford Regional Airport Character Area

This character area strengthens the Safford Regional Airport as a regional economic development driver and includes:

- Airport support businesses
- Airport support industry
- Aerospace and defense industry
- Commercial air travel
- Other appropriate uses to be identified by:
 - ~ A post-recession update of the Safford Regional Airport Master Plan 2006
 - ~ The preparation of a Safford Regional Airport Economic Development Strategy

Legend

- Safford Regional Airport Character Area

Industry Character Area



Industry (East and North)



Industry (South)

Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Industry Character Area

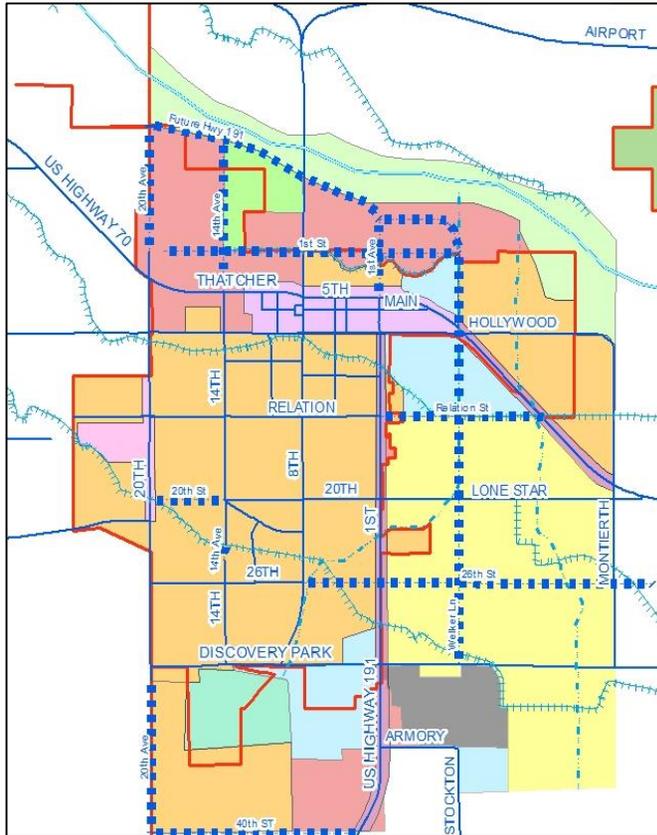
These character areas are located in areas served by US Highways 191 and 70 and/or in close proximity to the Rail Road. In addition to supporting general industry, industrial parks, warehouse, manufacture and distribution, areas in close proximity to the rail road may also support:

- Assembly/Manufacture
- Research and Development
- Innovation and Technology
- Full service inland port, rail yard, and intermodal facility
- Working rail track
- Industrial freezer, cold storage, manufacturing, and distribution buildings
- International and domestic intermodal containers
- Warehouse and distribution

Legend

- Industry Character Area

Aggregate/Extraction Character Area



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Aggregate/Extraction Character Area

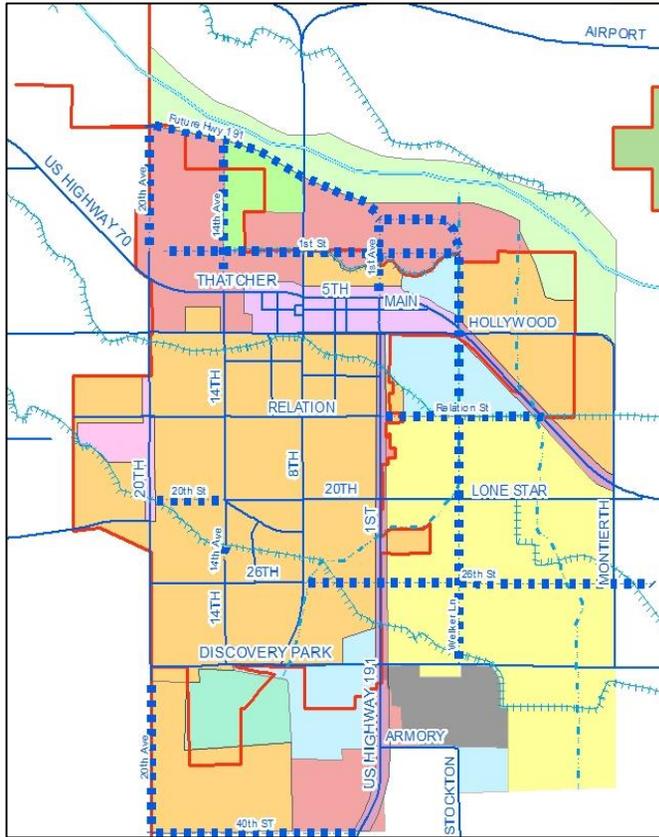
These character area is located south of Solomon Road along US Highways 191 and 70 and supports aggregate/extraction uses in conformance with Arizona Revised Statutes:

- Aggregate extraction operation
- Aggregate storage area
- Accessory uses to aggregate extraction such as:
 - ~ Mineral crushing
 - ~ Screening
 - ~ Sorting
 - ~ Washing
 - ~ Stock piling
 - ~ Vehicle and machinery parking

Legend

- Aggregate/Extraction Character Area

Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex



Source: Safford General Plan Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Gila River Recreation and Sports Complex

This character area must be carefully plan in conjunction with the Gila River Restoration and extension of US Highway 191 along the North Growth Area. This character area supports:

- Passive recreation and equestrian trails along the river
- Regional recreation multipurpose facilities
- Sports complex and ball fields
- Indoor and outdoor ball courts
- Parks, nature study areas, and hiking trails
- Horseback riding trails and facilities

Legend

- Gila River Recreation and Sports Complex Character Area



Community Vision

A community vision is a concise statement of the desired outcome supported by guiding principles, goals, policies and implementation strategies. The Safford Vision statement is the product of analysis of all the input received during the Envision Safford community involvement process.

SAFFORD'S VISION STATEMENT

Safford is a welcoming, attractive, economically viable, walkable, and bicycle-friendly healthy community with a small town feel, where people live, shop, play, learn, work, and recreate. Its thriving downtown exudes civic pride. Its skilled and integrated workforce attracts high wage employment. Sustainable infrastructure, excellent community services, mining, agribusiness, sustainable agriculture and food production, safe and livable neighborhoods, affordable housing for all income ranges, and vibrant retail base, Safford includes a restored riverfront, exceptional education, regional recreation and sports facilities, and spectacular mountain views make Safford a destination in the Gila River Valley and the Main Gateway to Southeastern Arizona.

Guiding Principles

After careful examination of existing documents, analysis of demographic and socioeconomic trends, assessment of physical and regulatory opportunities and challenges and incorporation of public input obtained during the Envision Safford public input process, which included a week-long design charrette, the following guiding principles were established to guide the vision of Safford.

GROWTH AREAS

Guiding Principle:

Safford's north, east, and south growth areas are carefully planned to expand the City's revenue base, maintain the small town feel of Safford while invigorating the region's economic engine, support sustainable agriculture, agribusiness, and clean energy, sustain high quality neighborhoods and vibrant industry, provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to the Downtown and restore the Gila River as a regional recreation asset.

Growth Areas Strategies:

Growth Areas strategies for the north, east and south growth areas of the City are discussed in the previous chapters.

LAND USE

Guiding Principle:

Align land use, infrastructure, economic development, public services, environmental resources and amenities to take full advantage of Safford's strategic location in the Gila River Valley and establish a thriving and sustainable regional economy that supports the long-range viability of the region, promotes a healthy, vital and competitive economic climate, retains, attracts, and supports a skilled workforce and promotes an appropriate mix of mining, agriculture, housing, retail, services, mixed-use, commerce, employment, and industry.

Land Use Strategies:

Create a flexible land use approach that promotes the regional synergies, partnerships, and strategies necessary to support:

- High-wage employment
- Retail, restaurant, and service industries
- Livable and safe neighborhoods with market rate and workforce housing
- Mixed-use opportunities
- Arts and entertainment
- Higher education, technology, and innovation
- Comprehensive medical services
- Sustainable agricultural practices and food production
- Regional recreation facilities
- Quality development

PARKS, RECREATION, SPORTS, SHARED PATHS, AND TRAILS

Guiding Principle:

Develop a regional integrated system of quality parks, recreation, sports, shared paths, and nature trails that provides connectivity to all growth and character areas, Downtown, the Safford Golf Club and regional attractions such as the Gila River and incorporates hiking and equestrian trail systems along the Gila River.



Parks, Recreation, Sports, Shared Paths and Trails Strategies

As provided in the Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex character area, there is a need to prepare a Regional Parks, Recreation, Shared Paths and Nature Trails Master Plan that:

- Assesses the feasibility of establishing a Regional Recreation District
- Identifies funding opportunities for acquisition and maintenance of parks and trails
- Supports connectivity to major north-south and east-west corridors and the Gila River Regional Recreation and Sports Complex
- Supports connectivity to the Mount Graham Golf Course, regional open space, and riparian areas
- Establishes a hierarchy of parks (pocket, neighborhood, community, and regional parks)
- Identifies standards for passive and active recreation that exceed national minimum standards
- Works with the Irrigation District to assess trail establishment along irrigation canals
- Enhances Mount Graham Golf Course
- Requires new developments to install sidewalks, provide trail connectivity, and include parks
- Protects riparian areas and wildlife corridors along the Gila River
- Identifies funding for the Gila River Restoration Project
- Establishes an annual “Runner’s Tour” connecting all current City parks and major landmarks and ending at Downtown
- Re-establishes the annual bike “Tour of Safford”
- Incorporates opportunities for paint ball, BMX, mountain biking, motocross, and other adventure sports
- Establishes skate board parks
- Includes dog parks



- Defines an accessible and efficient network of local streets that serves the established and future neighborhoods.
- Provides connectivity City-wide
- Improves local and regional access and mobility
- Defines Downtown as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly destination
- Provides safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to all growth and character areas
- Establishes an effective public transportation system (fixed route shuttles/circulator) where feasible
- Provides vehicular and bicycle parking areas in Downtown in close proximity to shuttle and circulator routes

TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ FISCAL VIABILITY

Guiding Principle:

Invigorate the region’s economic engine in a sustainable manner while protecting Safford’s assets, resources, and long-range fiscal viability and increasing its resiliency.

Guiding Principle:

Safford provides a high quality, safe, efficient, and convenient street network that is adequately maintained and supports access, local and regional mobility, alternate modes, and economic development.

Transportation Strategies

Design, implement, and maintain a smooth flowing, easily navigable transportation network throughout the City. This safe and efficient multimodal transportation network:

- Includes a well-defined hierarchy of roads for local and regional traffic

Economic Development Strategies

- Diversify the City’s economic development portfolio to achieve long-range fiscal viability and strengthen the region
- Position the Safford Airport to invigorate the economic development engine
- Support local businesses
- Explore opportunities for a freight, rail, air intermodal inland port in proximity to the railroad to position the region as a major transportation hub
- Continue to strengthen and support Downtown through façade improvement

projects and downtown revitalization and redevelopment efforts

- Enhance incentives for solar energy use
- Prepare an Economic Development Strategy that includes specific actions to increase all economic sectors (housing, employment, government, retail, commerce, mining, industry, health, education, agriculture, services, clean energy, and tourism) and support the quality of life needed to retain and attract major employers and retain youth:
 - ~ Quality safe neighborhoods
 - ~ A diversity of market rate and workforce housing affordable to all income ranges
 - ~ Mobility and access (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, vehicular)
 - ~ Sustainable and cost efficient infrastructure
 - ~ Job training to support a skilled labor force
 - ~ Parks, recreation, sports, trails, and open space
 - ~ Beautification and enhancements instilling a sense of pride and place
 - ~ Quality public services and facilities (library, health care, police, EMS, fire, communications, other)
 - ~ GED, vocational education, and four-year degrees (EAC, UofA, ASU, NAU partnerships)
 - ~ Quality child care
 - ~ Arts, entertainment, and amenities
- Establish a Chamber of Commerce to aggressively market the region
- Support the regional public/private partnerships and establish the intergovernmental agreements needed to strengthen the Gila River Valley
- Work with EAC, UofA, ASU, NAU to establish the partnerships needed to take competitive advantage of technology, innovation, and startup business incubators

- Explore solar and other clean energy alternatives
- Consider the establishment of an Art District and an Artist Relocation Program to invigorate Downtown

HOUSING

Guiding Principle:

Derive the housing policy from a concrete assessment of the existing housing data and characteristics. Recognize the fact that good housing is the building block of excellent neighborhoods and those excellent neighborhoods are the building blocks of great communities.



Housing Strategies:

Support a Safford housing strategy that is comprehensive in scope and provides:

- Decent, safe housing that is within the economic reach of residents of all income levels
- A range of housing densities and types appropriately scaled for Safford
- Quality new housing developments that incorporate the amenities desired
- Workforce housing, especially in the Downtown area and in areas including employment
- Existing housing stock rehabilitation for rental and ownership markets

- Improvements of sub-standard housing and demolition of unsafe, structurally unsound abandoned housing
- Mixed-use and multifamily development in Downtown and major employment areas at appropriate scales
- Opportunities for home ownership
- Aging in place and older adult active communities
- Opportunities for quality assisted living

COMMUNITY DESIGN, CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

Guiding Principle:

New development, infill, and redevelopment includes design features that further the vision of Safford. These identity features include gateways at major entrances to the City of Safford, and in character areas, neighborhoods and major developments. They also include landscape amenities and inviting streetscapes, overall beautification including façade improvements along Main Street, and the multimodal connectivity and recreational amenities needed to position Safford as a destination in the Gila River Valley.



Community Design Strategies

- Define gateways to the City to create a sense of arrival
- Define the US Highway Corridor 191 as the unifying multimodal spine providing north-south connectivity
- Define the US Highway Corridor 70 as the unifying multimodal spine providing east-west connectivity
- Enhance the pedestrian experience in downtown and in all character and growth areas
- Introduce regionally appropriate landscapes, plant palettes, materials, hardscapes, and forms
- Strengthen the façade improvements program in Downtown
- Prepare and adopt development and design guidelines for development in the different character areas
- Orient development to take advantage of view corridors and passive solar
- Provide incentives for the incorporation of:
 - ~ Complete streets;
 - ~ LEED design standards;
 - ~ Green building materials; and
 - ~ Energy efficient fixtures and solar panels in development, infill, and redevelopment if feasible
- Improve wayfinding through appropriate signage
- Protect “dark skies”

Concepts reflecting a strong identity and community character compatible with Safford’s scale developed during the Safford General Plan Update week-long design charrette are provided in the following pages.

14th Avenue Concept: Regional Commercial Shopping Center Including Retail, Restaurants, Services, Mixed-use and Outdoor Space



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

14th Avenue Concept: Regional Commercial Shopping Center Including Retail, Restaurants, Services, Mixed-use and Outdoor Space



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

14th Avenue Concept: Regional Commercial Shopping Center Including Retail, Restaurants, Services, Mixed-use and Outdoor Space



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015

Linear Park Concept: 8th Street and 8th Avenue



Source: Safford General Plan Week-long Design Charrette, The Planning Center, 2015



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

Guiding Principle:

Improve the sustainability of Safford by promoting energy efficiency, protecting water resources, embracing natural resources as economic development assets, and preserving the Gila River Valley wildlife corridor, habitats, native vegetation, washes, groundwater, watersheds, and mountain views.

Environmental Planning and Water Resources Strategies:

- Restore the Gila River by removing Salt Cedar and other invasive species to open regional opportunities throughout the Gila River Valley
- Protect environmentally sensitive riparian areas and wildlife corridors as economic development resources for eco-tourism, geo-tourism, and regional user-based passive recreation (nature trails, equestrian trails, nature learning and bird watching)
- Incentivize passive and active solar methods in new development and redevelopment
- Apply water conservation and reuse, and water harvesting methods, techniques, and best practices
- Explore solar and wind as clean alternative energy sources
- Protect mountain views

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Guiding Principle:

Safford supports high quality public services, efficient, cost-effective facilities and the sustainable infrastructure required to serve the current and future populations and needed to support the high quality of life desired by its residents.

Public Infrastructure Strategies

- Identify shovel-ready, City-owned sites and designate development investment areas
- Update the Wastewater Master Plan.
- Update the Water Master Plan.
- Continue to work with Graham County Flood Control District to address city-wide flood issues.
- Identify strategies to alleviate utilities starting costs for small businesses
- Improve the reliability of fiber for internet connection and wireless system

PUBLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES

Guiding Principle:

Safford supports high quality public community services with efficient, cost-effective facilities and the programs required to serve the current and future populations and to support the high quality of life desired by its residents.

Public Community Services Strategies

- Support the education, health, recreation, library programs and services.



COST OF DEVELOPMENT

Guiding Principle:

Develop implementation measures that will result in public/private fair cost sharing of capital facilities and services needed to serve new development and redevelopment.

Cost of Development Strategies

- Plan development and redevelopment in an integrated manner with infrastructure improvements.
- Establish a **measure of fairness** that guarantees that costs borne by new development result in a benefit to the development, and provides a reasonable relationship between development costs and the burden imposed on the City of Safford for providing additional necessary public services and infrastructure for new development.
- Require developers to pay their **fair share**, or portion of costs for providing infrastructure and public services necessary to support the proposed development and recover the cost of such infrastructure and services.
- Work with regional partners to address the impacts of development on regional systems.
- Identify all available mechanisms the City may use to fund and finance development costs to allow the public and private sectors to partner and find the best cost recovery approach.